



# REPORT

OF THE

## Christian Missionary Activities Enquiry Committee

MADHYA PRADESH

1956

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VOLUME I

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CHRISTIAN MISSIONARY ACTIVITIES ENQUIRY  
COMMITTEE, MADHYA PRADESH

From

Dr. M. B. Niyogi M.A. LL.M. LL.D. (Hon.) Kt. C.H.  
Chairman Christian Missionary Activities-  
Enquiry Committee Madhya Pradesh, Nagpur

To

Shri K. B. L. Seth I.C.S.,  
Chief Secretary to Government,  
Madhya Pradesh, Nagpur

*Nagpur, 18th April 1956*

Sir

I forward herewith the report of the Christian Missionary Activities Enquiry Committee appointed by the Government of Madhya Pradesh by Resolution No. 318716N. Constituted the 1st. April 1954 to enquire into the activities of the Christian Communities in Madhya Pradesh and other matters.

The particulars of the process of the enquiry are fully set forth in the opening part of the Report. The Committee are presenting their report concerning their conclusions of facts as contemplated in the Terms of Reference and also their Recommendations. The Committee are unanimous as to their recommendation on the question.



which State Governments can restrict or regulate the activities of religious bodies. Independently of this judgment the Committee had come to almost the same conclusions, and the suggestions made therein fully considered by them. It may be stated that throughout their deliberations the Committee were guided solely by the necessity to maintain intact the solidarity and security of the country, to prevent disruption of society and culture, and to emphasise the essential secular character of the Constitution. If they have drawn attention to certain disruptive tendencies inherent in, or incidental to, the exercise of certain liberties in matters of religion, they have done so not with a view to curtailing individual rights and freedom, but to the exercise thereof in a manner consistent with public order, morality and health. After all, the goodwill of the majority community in any country is the greatest and the safest guarantee for the fulfilment of Constitutional obligations, even more than law courts or executive authorities. The Committee have noted with great satisfaction that amongst a large section of Christian people there is a realisation of this basic factor. The Committee hope that their recommendations will lead to further searching of the heart. They have touched upon some highly controversial matters and would, therefore, request Government to elicit public opinion before taking any action.

5 I take this opportunity of tendering for myself and on behalf of the Committee, heart-felt thanks to all those, including the Missionaries, who gave to the Committee the benefit of their knowledge of facts, and their views, by personally appearing before the Committee or by sending their memoranda in response to the Questionnaire issued to them. The public spirit, which prompted them to accord their ready and willing co-operation, merits high appreciation. Acknowledgment of indebtedness is also due to those in the Committee's office, who rendered valuable assistance in various ways, as also to the Member-Secretary of the Committee, who rendered considerable help to the Chairman in drafting the report and last but not the least to those who assisted in the enquiry in the role of *amicus curiæ*.

Yours faithfully,  
M. B. NIYOGI.

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

## VOLUME I

### PART I

		PAGE
Chapter I	Introduction .. ..	1
Chapter II	Circumstances leading to the appointment of the Committee	6
Chapter III	Castes and Tribes of Madhya Pradesh ..	24

### PART II

Chapter I	Missions in Madhya Pradesh and India ..	31
Chapter II	History of Christian Missions, with special reference to old Madhya Pradesh and the merged States	34
Chapter III	Christian Post-war World Policy ..	52

### PART III

Chapter I	Religious liberty in other countries ..	61
Chapter II	Religious liberty under the Indian Constitution	87
Chapter III	Missionary activities in M. P , since Independence, as disclosed by oral and documentary evidence	95

### PART IV -

Chapter I	Conclusions (Findings) .. ..	131
Chapter II	Recommendations, with reasons ..	133
Chapter III	Summary of Recommendations . .	163

### APPENDICES

I.—Resolution of Government . .	167
II.—Press Notes issued by Government and the Committee	169
III —Statement showing particulars about Protestant Christian Missions operating in Madhya Pradesh and the institutions conducted by the several missions	173
IV —Bibliography . . . . .	180



# REPORT OF THE CHRISTIAN MISSIONARY ACTIVITIES ENQUIRY COMMITTEE, MADHYA PRADESH

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## VOLUME I

### PART I

#### CHAPTER I.—INTRODUCTION

The Christian Missionary Activities Enquiry Committee was appointed by a Resolution of the Government of Madhya Pradesh No 318-716-V-Con, dated the 14th of April, 1954 (Appendix I)

2 It was represented to Government from time to time that the conversion of illiterate aboriginals and other backward people was effected by the Christian Missionaries either forcibly or through fraud or temptations of monetary gain, and the Government were informed that the feelings of non-Christians were being offended by conversions brought about by such methods. The Christian Missionaries repudiated before Government these allegations and charged local officials and non-Christians of harassment and as the State Government found that an agitation was growing on either side, it considered it desirable in the public interest to have a thorough enquiry made into the whole question. This Committee was, therefore, appointed, with Dr M Bhawani Shankar Niyogi, MA, LL M, LL D, Ex-Chairman, Public Service Commission, Madhya Pradesh, and retired Chief Justice, High Court of Judicature at Nagpur, as Chairman, and Shri Ghanshyam Singh Gupta, B Sc, LL B, Ex-Speaker, Madhya Pradesh Legislative Assembly, Duig, Shri Seth Govind Das, M P., Jabalpur, Shri Kirtimant Rao, BA, MLA, Ahiri, Tahsil Sironcha, District Chanda, Shri S K Georje, MA, BD, Professor, Commerce College, Wardha, and Shri B P Pathak, MA, LL B, Secretary to Government, Madhya Pradesh, Public Health Department, as members. Seth Govind Das resigned membership on 8th May, 1954 due to his pre-occupation with other work and was substituted by Shri Ratanlal Malviya, BA, LL B, M P, Manendiagarh, (vide Resolution No 419-860-V-Con, dated 8th May, 1954). On his appointment to the Madhya Pradesh Cabinet, Shri Kirtimant Rao also resigned and was succeeded by Shri Bhanupratapsingh Giri Raj Singh Deo, MP, of Komakhan, Tahsil Mahasamund, District Raipur, (vide Resolution No 18-279-XXX-MR, dated 4th January, 1955).

3 The Committee was entrusted with the task of making a thorough enquiry into the whole question and to make recommendations on a review thereof from historical and other points of view

4. The Committee was authorised to frame its own procedure for conducting the enquiry and to appreciate the circumstances in which the Government considered it necessary to appoint this Committee, access to certain files of Government was permitted. On going through all the relevant material, the Committee thought it necessary and desirable to meet representative members of the contestant parties at various important centres in the State and to ascertain the specific points in the controversy. The Committee undertook a tour of the following 14 districts —

- |              |                 |
|--------------|-----------------|
| (1) Raigarh  | (8) Akola       |
| (2) Surguja  | (9) Buldana     |
| (3) Raipur   | (10) Mandla     |
| (4) Bilaspur | (11) Jabalpur.  |
| (5) Amravati | (12) Betul      |
| (6) Nimar    | (13) Chhindwara |
| (7) Yeotmal  | (14) Balaghat   |

Seventy-seven centres were visited and an approximate number of 11,360 people were contacted. 375 written statements were received and the Committee took down notes at each centre. To gain first-hand knowledge of the working of the various Mission institutions, the Committee visited institutions like hospitals, schools, churches, leper homes, hostels, etc., maintained by the various Missions operating in Madhya Pradesh and also had an opportunity of contacting local people amongst whom activities of the Missions were carried on and also the areas in which the various Missions were functioning. A copy of the tour programme is appended (Vol II). The persons whom we interviewed came from about 700 villages and the statements of a large number of spokesmen from amongst them were recorded.

5 On the vital matter of religion, which is ordinarily surcharged with emotion, occasionally there was a flare-up of vehemence but such occasions were extremely rare, as ample precaution was taken at the outset of the proceedings to explain the object of the enquiry as being to clear up doubts and disputes that may exist and to promote goodwill, friendliness and peace among the various sections of the people. The exploratory work of the Committee accordingly proceeded very smoothly and helpfully, except for two minor incidents, at Takhatpur in Bilaspur district and Jabalpur. At Takhatpur Shri Ottalwar, Advocate, who was the only spokesman addressing the Committee on behalf of a large concourse of rural people, made some critical remarks of a political nature on the admission made by Rev Maqbul Masih that he had received Rs 38,000 from America for the

Abundant Life Movement carried on by him in the rural areas with a view to stave off the danger of Communism. No protest was made by Rev Masih, but only by the representative of the Catholic Association, Mr Francis. At Jabalpur, an Arya Samajist referred to some passages in the Bible which he thought inculcated immortality, while he was speaking about religious education. As the Christians present resented the reference the Committee asked the speaker to drop it and he obeyed.

6 In all the places visited by the Committee there was unanimity as regards the excellent service rendered by the Missionaries, in the fields of education and medical relief. But on the other hand there was a general complaint from the non-Christian side that the schools and hospitals were being used as means of securing converts. There was no disparagement of Christianity or of Jesus Christ, and no objection to the preaching of Christianity and even to conversions to Christianity. The objection was to the illegitimate methods alleged to be adopted by the Missionaries for this purpose, such as offering allurements of free education and other facilities to children attending their schools, adding some Christian names to their original Indian names, marriages with Christian girls, money-lending, distributing Christian literature in hospitals and offering prayers in the wards of in-door patients. Reference was also made to the practice of the Roman Catholic priests or preachers visiting new-born babies to give 'ashish' (blessings) in the name of Jesus, taking sides in litigation or domestic quarrels, kidnapping of minor children and abduction of women and recruitment of labour for plantations in Assam or Andaman as a means of propagating the Christian faith among the ignorant and illiterate people. There was a general tendency to suspect some ulterior political or extra-religious motive, in the influx of foreign money for evangelistic work in its varied forms. The concentration of Missionary enterprise on the hill tribes in remote and inaccessible parts of the forest areas and their mass conversion with the aid of foreign money were interpreted as intended to prepare the ground for a separate independent State on the lines of Pakistan. In the Raigarh and Surguja districts, the Christians complained against the petty Government officials, but there were practically none in other districts including Berar. At the meetings held in Surguja, Raigarh and Bilaspur districts there were present prominent Christian representatives, like Rev Lakra of Ranchi, Rev Kujur (Lutheran Mission), Rev Gurbachansingh (American Evangelical Mission), Rev Masih (Disciples of Christ), Shri Minz (General Secretary of the Catholic Sabha). Shri Minz complained against the sinister activities of Boko Sardar, of Shri Deshpande, Advocate, of Baijnath Mishra and of the Tribal Welfare Department. Shri Jagdish Tirkey Secretary of the Adiwasi Jharkhand Party, claimed that Jharkhand was necessary to preserve the unity of the Uraons. He and Rev Kujur repudiated the imputation against the Missionaries that they instigated the movement for an independent State. There were no specific complaints against officers or non-Christians besides the above. But there was a

general complaint about the non-recognition of Mission schools. Rev. Nath of Khandwa complimented the Mission for elevating the Ballahs from their down-trodden condition in the Hindu society. In the Betul district meeting, Rev. E. Raman and many American Missionaries had no complaints to make against the Government officers or members of the public.

7 On the basis of the allegations made orally and in writing by a large number of people including Christians, supplemented by information derived from official source and published literature bearing on the subject-matter of the enquiry it was thought necessary to make a thorough and searching probe into the problem. Accordingly, an elaborate questionnaire came to be issued so as to afford full opportunity to the public concerned to assist the Committee in every way possible.

8 It may be noted that the Committee was not appointed under any enactment such as the Commission of Enquiry Act IX of 1952 but only under the inherent powers of the State Government. The Committee consequently functioned on a purely voluntary basis. It had neither the power to compel any one to attend before it nor to make any statement, oral or written, nor to administer an oath. The Committee thus had no coercive power in any shape or form. No one was bound to answer all or any question contained in the Questionnaire or to answer it in a prescribed manner. The enquiry was not judicial, in the sense that it was calculated to have an operative effect. As the Committee interpreted the Terms of Reference, it appeared to it that the object of the enquiry was to ascertain the facts from the people directly at first-hand, unlike a judicial enquiry which proceeds on the material brought before it by an investigating authority. The attitude of the Government as well as that of the party in power, was perfectly neutral.

9 The scope of the enquiry was considerably enlarged by reason of the broad Terms of Reference relating to 'Political and extra-religious objectives' and "a thorough review of the question from the historical and other points of view". At first sight the subject of the enquiry presented itself as a purely local one but that turned out to be more apparent than real. The material gathered in the initial stages of the enquiry revealed to the Committee that its significance far transcended the bounds of any one country or region in the world and that it was calculated to have world-wide repercussions. That compelled the Committee to view the subject as an integral part of a larger picture on the broad canvas of world history. The Committee had to consult a number of published books, pamphlets and periodicals for determining the nature and form of their recommendations.

10 On the true construction of the Terms of Reference the Committee found that the subject in hand should be divided under specified heads, viz., Conversions, Social Relations, Hospitals and

Schools with a separate head for Remedies The questions set out under each of these heads are indeed exploratory and searching, but in no way unconnected with the issues involved in the enquiry

11 The response to the Questionnaire was encouraging, indicating as it did the co-operation of the public as well as of the Protestant Missionary Bodies operating in the various districts of the State 385 replies to the questionnaire were received in the office of the Committee out of which 55 were from Christian individuals or organisations and 330 from non-Christians The authorities and members of the Roman Catholic Church co-operated with the Committee in their exploratory tours in Raigarh, Surguja, Bilaspur, Raipur and Nimai districts Shri G X Francis, President of the Catholic Regional Council, and Shri P Lobo, Advocate, High Court, Nagpur, associated themselves with the Committee. But subsequently the Catholic Church withdrew its co-operation, not only filing a statement of protest, but also moving the High Court for a Mandamus Petition (Miscellaneous Petition No 263 of 1955)

Then Lordships dismissed the petition on 12th April, 1956, holding that it was within the competence of the State Government to appoint a fact-finding Committee to collect information and that there had been no infringement of any of the fundamental rights of the petitioner The Committee have gone through the lengthy judgment of the Hon'ble High Court very carefully and have given respectful consideration to the views expressed therein We may however like to state that some of the remarks concerning a few questions in our Questionnaire proceed from an apparent lack of full knowledge of the nature of the allegations made before us which formed the basis of those questions We had repeatedly informed the petitioner and the public that none of the questions represented either the views of the Committee or any individual member thereof and our anxiety to have information on various points was due to our desire to find out to what extent, if any, could any activity be considered to infringe the limits of public order, morality and health imposed by the Constitution As will be clear from the body of this report, we have confined ourselves entirely to the spirit and letter of our Constitution.



## CHAPTER II—CIRCUMSTANCES LEADING TO THE APPOINTMENT OF THE COMMITTEE

In another part we propose to give the history of Christian Missions in old Madhya Pradesh and also in the Merged States. In this Chapter it is intended to detail the circumstances which led the Government to appoint this Fact-finding Committee. Our source of information has been the various files made available to us by Government. As the immediate cause which ultimately led to our appointment was the activities of some Mission organizations in the recently Merged States of Raigarh, Udaipur, Jashpur and Surguja, it will be useful to describe the principal or root causes of whatever trouble was reported in the integrated States soon after their merger on 1st January, 1948. Even in the old Madhya Pradesh the Government was not unfamiliar with the problem of Missionary activities amongst aboriginals, because many of our districts contained a large number of Adiwasī population and Government had been carrying out welfare measures for them for a good length of time. It is reported that about 18 per cent of the total population of Madhya Pradesh prior to Integration consisted of aboriginals and that the Integration of the States added nearly 28 lakhs to the population of Madhya Pradesh, out of whom about 53 per cent were aboriginals. According to official reports the integration of Chhattisgarh States was carried out smoothly and was hailed with joy by all sections of the community including the aboriginals. When the then Premier toured the Integrated States, attempts were made by Christian and other Uraons of Jashpur State to create some trouble, but it never presented a formidable problem.

2 The chief cause of unrest could be located against the following background —

(a) Oppression and mis-government which existed prior to Integration. In other parts of this Report a detailed reference to the various forms of oppression practised on the Adiwasīs by the Malguzars, the Zamindars and the ex-Rulers will be found.

(b) The expectations of the people of the Integrated States of immediate improvement in their moral and material conditions as a result of Integration were pitched so high that almost inevitably they were bound to be disappointed to some extent. Improvement of conditions in a specially backward area has necessarily to be a gradual process, which was not recognized.

(c) Almost from the very beginning interested parties including Christian Missionaries, began to intermeddle and create dissatisfaction by exploiting the situation. These interested parties were firstly the Rajas and their supporters and hirelings and also politicians of the neighbouring States, who wished to secure

integration of some of the former States in their area despite history, geography and economy. An end was put to the activities of such persons by the decision of the Union Ministry of States in May 1948, but according to Government reports the activities of Missionaries continued further, though surreptitiously.

(d) The reports which the Government of Madhya Pradesh had obtained from the former States in respect of the activities of Missionaries show that their role in the past had not been healthy, their methods not savoury. Two or three times there were rebellions in the States and even the Political Department, which was in the hands of the European Christians, was compelled to put restrictions on the entry of Missionaries and their movement in the former States. Details of the Acts passed by the former States of Surguja, Udaipur and Raigarh regulating conversion and restricting the movement, etc., of Missionaries will be found elsewhere in this Report. On the integration of the States, Missionaries became afraid of losing their influence. So they started an agitation, playing on the religious feelings of the primitive Christian converts, representing the Madhya Pradesh Government as consisting of infidels and so on. Some of the articles published in Missionary papers, such as 'Nishkalank' 'Adiwas' and 'Jhaikhand' were hardly distinguishable from the writings in Muslim papers advocating Pakistan before the 15th of August 1947. The Missionaries launched a special attack on the opening of schools by Madhya Pradesh Government under the Backward Area Welfare Scheme. The then Commissioner of Chhattisgarh Division, contacted the Father Superior of the Roman Catholics at Jashpurnagar in February 1948 and explained to him the secular nature of the Indian Union and the freedom of religion and worship which every citizen enjoyed in it. He pointed out that there was no hindrance to Missionaries carrying on their religious activity in a lawful manner but if the leaders of the Missions mixed up religion with politics and appealed to the religious fanaticism of the easily gullible Adiwas' they could not naturally claim the sanctity and consideration which attaches to religious organisations. He further explained that having once suffered grievously from the communalistic policies of some persons, India could not afford to have another such movement in its very heart. The Catholic Father Superior gave the Commissioner an undertaking that the Mission would confine itself only to religion and not dabble in politics at all. The following letter written by Father Verriere of the Jashpur Roman Catholic Mission may be quoted in extenso, to show the attitude of the Missionaries including foreigners, at the time of the Integration of the States —

"We need help very much as we are so deep in debt and have to face worse times with a new Government so much against the Christians

Rev. Father Rector has probably acquainted you with what I wrote some time ago. Things have not much improved, although we are rather on good terms with the local authorities. Even so it is no more as before. At more than one of the new or old official points out, the men on this side are too inferior, and cannot compare with, for instance, the late Dewan. Next those employed do not seem to have half the powers necessary. Things have continually to be referred higher up, (which means most of the time no answer to the letters) and petitions, are delayed for five or six months. What I say is the common complaint all over Jashpur from officials, no less than from the common people. Moreover it seems to be a common complaint all over the Province, that this is the way.

"We should, e.g., settle about the transition from Patna syllabus to that of Nagpur. But the new Inspectors have still to come. They are always coming but never arrive. The best and probably the most sympathetic to whom I wrote a personal letter, and is practically for us, the best would come in April then in May, lately he informed me that he would come this month. July is over and there is no trace of him. They have been wasting the month of May and part of June on Adult Education, good in itself but much of a farce as it was conducted. Hindu propaganda with open attempts to draw the Christians into the Hindu fold, occupied a large part of the programme. In the end the Christians refused to go, on account of that propaganda and the Education came to an end. Meanwhile the Inspectors have no time for any other work than that.

"The Bishop wishes me to discuss with them the question of our attempted High School at Gmabahat, but cannot do this with such fellows who come as makeshifts, till they can get away.

"You may have read lately in the Herald some very spirited answers purposed to come from Jashpur Christian students against the vile slander by one who came with a large retinue to spy our Institutions at Gholeng and Gmabahat. He dares call himself a member of the much esteemed Servants of India Society. He and his colleague have nearly wrecked the nascent Mission of the Norbertine Fathers in Mandla District Jubbulpore. They were sent here by the Prime Minister, but if they hope to ruin this Mission, they are very much mistaken. Our Catholics are too advanced to be taken in or frightened by such slanderers. Protest meetings against their vile report continue to be held, chiefly to wreck their treacherous machinations. As one of the two is a sort of Minister for the uplift of the backward people, he has a considerable Government budget to dispose of. Their aim is more to prevent us from converting, than to care for the uplift of those they used to

keep them in bondage Just now they are starting 40 new schools for these backward Adibasis The third I hear of, is in a village where we possess a school since 30 years But knowing that many pagan children come to our schools and that we had sent a petition for a building to enlarge that school, they surreptitiously try and draw away the pagan children from us But we are ready for them Today my men are gone there to attend a big panchayat to draw up a protest, and get all the pagans to refuse withdrawing their children from us I am giving you all this for the sake of those in the community interested in Jashpur affairs ”

In a subsequent visit to the then Premier at Nagpur, Father Vermiere was confronted with this letter and he then gave an undertaking in writing that he would have no objection to schools being established by Government in the States

3 Let us turn our attention to the activities of the Missionaries in the Merged States of Surguja and Udaipur during the months following their Integration It has already been mentioned that the former Rulers of these States had consistently stopped the infiltration of Missionaries in their territories and with the full knowledge and consent of the then Political Department Anti conversion Acts were passed In spite of these Acts individual Missionaries, specially Rev Stanislaus Tigga, a Roman Catholic Priest with his headquarters in Ranchi, kept on visiting these areas surreptitiously and carried on propaganda in the garb of religion The strip of land comprising Surguja, Korea, Jashpur, Udaipur, Changbhakar and some other small States of Orissa is surrounded by Bihar and Orissa States and is inhabited by a very large percentage of aborigines The tract is full of forests and mineral resources Foreign Missionaries from Belgium and Germany had established themselves in Bihar and Orissa and also in Jashpur in 1834 and had succeeded in converting a very large number of people to Christianity In order to consolidate and enhance their prestige, and possibly to afford scope for alien interests in this tract, the Missionaries were reported to be carrying on propaganda for the isolation of the Aborigines from other sections of the community, and the movement of Jharkhand was thus started This movement was approved by the Aborigines local Christians and Muslims and the Missionaries sought to keep it under their influence by excluding all the nationalist elements from this movement The demand for Adiwasthan was accentuated along with the one for Pakistan in 1938 The Muslim League is reported to have donated Rs one lakh for propaganda work With the advent of political independence in India, the agitation for Adiwasthan was intensified with a view to forming a sort of corridor joining East Bengal with Hyderabad which could be used for a pincer movement against India in the event of a war between India and Pakistan The Christian community supported by the Missionaries of the Ranchi district organised themselves into a 'Raivat Wang', ostensibly to do social

work, but in reality to propagate the Adiwasī movement. To counteract the isolationist doctrine of this organization of Christians, the non-Christians formed a Praja Mandal. Although there was a tussle between these two organizations which continued till the integration of the States with Madhya Pradesh, they joined hands on learning that Surguja and Jashpur States were being merged with Madhya Pradesh and started a pro-Bihar agitation. At the prospect of the integration of the States with Madhya Pradesh Mr Jaipal Singh, member of the Constituent Assembly and President of the All-India Adiwasī Association, who is also commonly described as the father of the Jharkhand movement, protested in November 1947 against the merger of Surguja and Jashpur with Madhya Pradesh and accused the Bihar Government with failure to serve the people by not insisting on the integration of those States with Bihar. After having seen the then Premier of Bihar at Ranchi Shri Jaipal Singh convened a conference of All-India Adiwasī Maha Sabha, on 14th January of 1948. This pro-Bihar agitation, which was originally started at the instance of the Roman Catholic and Lutheran Missionaries of Ranchi in Bihar district, soon obtained the support of other Christians, non-Christians, aborigines and members of the Bihar Congress party and it was also reported that the then Hon'ble Premier of Bihar and the Hon'ble Revenue Minister had sympathy with this cause. Accordingly a party consisting of some Bihar Congressmen, Rev Lakra, the head of the Lutheran Mission and a Jamidar visited Surguja in the second week of January 1948 to mobilise public opinion in favour of the integration of those States with Bihar. Two members of this party, however, informed the District Superintendent of Police, Surguja, that they were not fully agreeable to the views of the remaining members and further brought to the District Superintendent of Police's notice that there was a conspiracy between Pakistan and some American and German Missionaries to instigate the aborigines to take possession of their own land commonly known as Jharkhand. In Kharsaon and Sarikela States of Orissa there was violence necessitating the use of force to suppress it. At the All-India Adiwasīs' conference on 14th January, of 1948, called by Mr Jaipal Singh, speeches after speeches were made narrating the disadvantages and worries associated with the merger of the States with Madhya Pradesh and the benefits accruing from their amalgamation with Bihar. Two Christians and a non-Christian were appointed propagandists to carry on pro-Bihar agitation. The Praja Mandal which consisted mostly of non-Christians and which was lacking in funds refused to support the pro-Bihar propaganda and in a meeting held at Bargaon (Jashpur) on 20th January, 1948 it was unanimously resolved to agree to the integration of Surguja and Jashpur with Madhya Pradesh.

4 The activities of the Missionaries in the Jashpur area from January 1948 to the end of May when the Union Ministry of States decided finally the question of merger of Surguja and Jashpur with Madhya Pradesh may be narrated. According to official

reports these activities, though ostensibly carried on by Indian Christians, were in fact sponsored by Missionaries to secure a strong foothold in the hitherto forbidden territories of Udaipur and Surguja

**January 1948.**—The agitation for the inclusion of Jashpur, Udaipur, Surguja and Changbhakar States in the Bihar Province was continued and prominent persons of Ranchi visited Jashpur. Rev J Lakra, the head of German Lutheran Mission, carried on propaganda for a separate Jharkhand Province, which would be administered by Christians, who predominated in the area concerned. Three meetings of Christians were held in the Jashpur State for the purpose of carrying on this propaganda.

**February 1948**—Three more meetings were held in Jashpur sub-division in connection with the Christian agitation in favour of amalgamation with Bihar. Speakers pointed out that inclusion in the Central Provinces would mean economic and social retardation and the evaporation of their dream of Jharkhand. At a meeting at Ichkelah (Jashpur) on 13th February it was announced that an Adiwasī fund for defending the interests of Adiwasīs had been started. Rev J Lakra was suspected of dissuading Christians from participating in Mahatma Gandhi's Ashes Immersion Ceremony observed at Jashpur on 12th February. Julius Tigga, Secretary Adiwasī Sabha, Ranchi, visited Jashpur and Ambikapur about the 14th of February and was warned by the District Magistrate, Surguja, for indulging in objectionable activities. On 21st February 1948, Bowfus Lakra, a parliamentary Secretary of Bihar and Joseph Tigga, Pleader of Ranchi addressed a small meeting at the prominent Roman Catholic Mission Centre of Ginabāhar in which, although opposition to the formation of Jharkhand was voiced, it was stated that people should be allowed to decide whether they should be associated with Madhya Pradesh or Bihar. These intense political activities of the Christians under the leadership of foreign Missionaries created a sense of apprehension and consequently the non-Christian organization called the Praja Mandal mobilized their resources to counteract this movement. A few meetings were called and addressed by this party on or about the 23rd of February. Rev J Lakra called a session of the All-India Adiwasī Maha Sabha at Ranchi on the 26th of February and delegates from Orissa, Chhattisgarh States and Bihar attended it. Mr Jaipal Singh, who was elected President of the Maha Sabha criticized the Bihar Government for splitting the tribal people and emphasised that the salvation of the Adiwasīs lay in the creation of a separate province including the States of Chhattisgarh. He proposed to raise and send 1000 volunteers for propaganda purposes.

**March 1948**—A meeting was organised by the Lutheran Christians at Bargaon in Jashpur to further the propaganda of merger with Bihar. There was propaganda on the border villages of Surguja district by Christian Missionaries of Palamau and Ranchi.

5. It was during this time that the then Premier of Madhya Pradesh undertook a tour of those areas and it was reported that a good deal of misapprehension regarding Government policy, etc., was removed and that open and extensive activities of the Missionaries through Indian Christian Father and Preachers were subdued, and Police officials reported that thenceforth the agitation was carried on in a surreptitious manner. In October 1941, a Gaonthia of Singuja was detained under the Public Safety Act for objectionable activities and a search of his house revealed him in possession of letters which showed that he was an active worker of the Jharkhand movement, on behalf of the Gaonthias and that the agitation was still being carried on for the creation of a separate Adiwasī Province. The Gaonthia was ultimately released on his giving a written undertaking that he would not take part in any subversive activities.

6. In the neighbouring State of Udupur activities were mostly confined to Rev. S. Tigga. The laws which were in force in the former Merged States were continued on integration and consequently the Anti-conversion Act had also been continued. The Anti-conversion Act of Udupur had been promulgated on 24 July 1946—nearly an year and a half after the Ruler of the State was installed in December 1944. But to put a check on the unfair activities of the Roman Catholic Priest, the then Political Agent had passed an order on 28th February 1941 [D.O. No. G 59 CR 37 (II)] permitting the entry of Roman Catholic Priests only on the following conditions—

- (1) Priests could be allowed to enter the State when called to the bed-side of a dying or dangerously ill person. The Priest concerned must in such cases personally give information of his visits at the Police Station nearest to the route by which he travelled.
- (2) Priests may be permitted to enter the State once every quarter to celebrate Mass at some village near the border. Previous permission for this should be obtained from the Superintendent of the State on each occasion. The Priests should not tour in the State but then parishioners should come to them at the place which was selected for the celebration of Mass.
- (3) A Priest should not stay more than 48 hours in the State on any occasion unless unavoidably delayed by circumstances over which he has no control, provided firstly that in such a case he informed in writing the Officer-in-charge of a Police Station nearest to his route when leaving the State, giving particulars of the obstacle which caused the delay and secondly that no visit was extended to more than 96 hours.

without previous sanction of the Superintendent of the State. Priests should not do any religious propaganda or proselytization while in the State.

- (4) Only Ordained Priests and not lay Preachers from outside should be allowed to enter the State.

7. After Integration Rev S Tigga, a Roman Catholic Missionary thwarted these restrictions and visited the State several times up to the month of May 1948. He was warned against doing so by the Sub-Divisional Officer, but he did not pay any attention to it. Ultimately the Sub-Divisional Officer ordered his prosecution under section 188, Indian Penal Code for disobeying those restrictions and Rev Tigga was sentenced to pay a fine of Rs 20. Although he was in possession of the requisite amount he refused to pay the fine and had to be imprisoned for four days in consequence to suffer imprisonment which had been ordered in default of the payment of the fine. This sudden "invasion" of areas in Udaipur State by Roman Catholic Missionaries created a sharp reaction in the mind of the local people and they represented to the Government as well as the district authorities against encouraging the Missionaries to establish their centres in the Udaipur State and thereby to prevent mass conversions of Uraons. Government apprehended an imminent danger of breach of the peace and disturbance of public tranquility and it also felt that Communist bodies functioning in areas outside Madhya Pradesh on the immediate borders of Surguja, Udaipur and Jashpur States might take advantage of the situation and create trouble, similar to the one which was then raging in the neighbouring States. Accordingly an order, under section 144, Criminal Procedure Code was passed restricting the entry of Christian Missionaries in the Udaipur Sub-Division except for purposes of religious work. The order was on the lines of the restrictions mentioned in paragraph 6 above and remained in force for nearly a year from 27th January 1949. It is reported that about 20 to 25 persons were arrested for defiance of this order. Throughout the year 1949 the Roman Catholic Bishop of Ranchi and some Roman Catholic leaders of Nagpur made repeated efforts to seek the permission of the State Government to establish centres in the Udaipur Sub-Division. The restrictions which were imposed in the former State Regime were still in force and Government had information with them to show that Christian Missionaries in the Udaipur State were indulging in political activities of an objectionable kind really reminiscent of the two nation theory which had awful consequences in the history of India. Considering that such dangerous activities could not be tolerated by any responsible Government they were not prepared to remove the restrictions altogether. In view of the political bias with which Christian Missionaries had carried on proselytism during the last half a century in the merged territories and in view of their active support of the dangerous Jharkhand movement, Government considered it necessary to put down the activities which led to fissiparous tendencies. In a conference held by



the Hon'ble the Premier on 29th March, 1949 with three Roman Catholic leaders (Major Bernard M.L.A. Shri G. X. Francis and Major A. F. W. da Costa) the policy of the State Government was fully and carefully explained and it was pointed out that India being a secular State, there was perfect freedom of thought and religion but difficulties cropped up only when religious organisations mixed this up with politics. At this conference it was pointed out by the Government spokesman that several non-Christians had represented to Government about the activities of the Missionaries in the Integrated States in particular about religious instruction being imparted in their schools. This had become necessary because ever since the opening of schools by the Tribal Welfare Department, Roman Catholic Missionaries had carried on persistent propaganda against such schools and had represented this to the State Government also. Although Father Vermeire had intimated that he had no objection to Government starting schools in Jashpur side by side with the Mission schools the Roman Catholic Bishop of Ranchi kept on representing that this should not be done. It was therefore pointed out at the conference that the duty of Government being to provide non-sectarian educational instruction for the people, no legitimate objection could be taken against it. On the question of restrictions imposed on the entry of Christian Priests in Udaipur State, the official point of view was pointed out and it was explained how the situation had developed on account of the mingling of religion with politics. The leaders present were told that the policy of Government towards matters of religion was one of allowing complete freedom of conscience and worship to all and there was not the slightest intention to have a different policy in Udaipur or other States. The gentlemen present were requested to remove any misconception from the minds of the people and to tell them that Government would not interfere in their peaceful religious pursuit so long as they did not mix up politics with religion. Major da Costa on behalf of the Catholics assured Government of the loyalty of Catholics and informed that Catholics had no connection whatsoever with the Jharkhand movement. The three leaders present assured the Premier of their unflinching loyalty to Government and of their determination to co-operate and help Government in every possible manner and they requested that the question of allowing reliable Christian Priests to reside in Udaipur might be favourably considered by Government after making due enquiries about their bonafides and Government promised to examine the suggestion. Shri Francis informed the Premier that he would take an early opportunity of visiting Udaipur and Jashpur to tell the people of the policy of Government and to remove all mis-conceptions. In accordance with this promise Shri Francis undertook a tour of the newly integrated States of Udaipur and Jashpur between 20th and 25th April 1949. It appears that the representations made by Shri Francis and other Roman Catholic leaders of Nagpur to the Government

of Madhya Pradesh were at the instance of the Roman Catholic Mission working in the Jashpur area. After the conference of these leaders with the Premier on 29th March, 1949 details were apparently reported to the then Roman Catholic Bishop of Ranchi, who on 18th April, 1949 came to Nagpur and gave a written pledge on his behalf as well as on behalf of his Priests, undertaking to give all due obedience and respect to the lawfully constituted Government of India and the lawfully constituted Government of Madhya Pradesh and also stated that while carefully abstaining from participating in political affairs it was his desire and purpose that his influence in so far as may be possible in such matters shall be so exerted in loyal co-operation with Government. In view of this undertaking Rt Rev O'Sevrin, Bishop of Ranchi, requested Government to allow without further delay his Priests to reside in Udaipur without whose presence the Catholics were effectively prevented from practising their religion in a normal way. As regards the apprehension that the Priests might meddle in politics the Bishop assured the Government that as far as his Priests were concerned they would not do so and that they had not done so in the past. He stated that although soon after Integration he was approached more than once by Bihar Congressmen and other supporters of the Jharkhand movement to lend his support to the movement towards amalgamation with Bihar he had refused to co-operate. On account of this he had incurred the hostility, not only of the Lutherans in Jashpur, but of many Catholics in Ranchi. In this letter the Bishop stated, "If we, Catholic Priests, had chosen to urge them on in the direction of joining the Jharkhand movement the situation in Jashpur and Udaipur would have been much worse than it is now, considering that very close to one-fourth of the population of Jashpur is Catholic." This is a significant admission of the control exercised by Roman Catholic Priests in matters outside religion and of the existence of a state of political agitation in the newly merged States of Jashpur, Udaipur and Surguja, soon after Integration. Along with his request to allow Catholic Priests to reside in Udaipur State, the Bishop levelled charges against petty local officials and also non-officials. It was also stated that patent discrimination which was officially adopted by the Central Provinces Government against Christian aboriginals in denying them scholarships and other concessions was much resented by the Catholics. The following are some of the reported grievances of Catholics in Jashpur voiced by the Bishop of Ranchi —

- (1) There have been several cases of Catholic candidates for Government posts being asked as a condition for employment to give up Christianity and become Hindus. Although the letter admitted that this allegation was made on what is "being whispered about", the Government was asked to remedy the situation.

- (2) The Catholics are not enrolled as Home Guards and are not given other posts
- (3) Many Catholics at the request of Congress leaders at Raigarh had collected a fair sum of money for Gandhi Memorial Fund. They were severely rebuked by some officials
- (4) The attitude of some leaders of the Backward Area Welfare Sabha was against the Roman Catholics
- (5) The whole policy of the Adiwasi Sudhar Sabha was one of sheer waste of money and conducive to breach of peace
- (6) Government schools should not be opened where Roman Catholic schools already exist

8 In his report of the tour undertaken in April, 1949 Shri G X Francis voiced almost the same grievances which had already been put forward by the Bishop of Ranchi in his communication dated 18th April 1949

9 Enquiries were ordered by Government into the allegations made by the Bishop of Ranchi and Shri Francis and it was reported by the authorities that in spite of the denial by the Bishop of the part played by the Jashpur Roman Catholics in the Jharkhand political movement definite evidence existed to prove that the Roman Catholic Mission authorities at Ranchi had made common cause with other elements and were taking active part in this movement. The vehement opposition of the Roman Catholic Bishop to the Backward Areas Welfare Scheme was explained by the blow given to the proselytising activities of the Roman Catholics through their schools by the Backward Areas Welfare Scheme. Government however could not take an immediate decision to permit the Priests to reside in Udaipur because of the strong feelings of a considerable section of the people there against such action and therefore it was considered desirable to await the Constitution which was then being drafted by the Constituent Assembly

10 The efforts of the Christian Association of which Shri G X Francis is the Chairman and of the Bishop of Ranchi to secure cancellation of the orders in respect of the residence of the Priests in Udaipur State continued unabated till the promulgation of the Constitution in January, 1950. Besides, written individual representations of Shri Francis and other Catholic leaders, the demand was raised in some of the All-India conferences of this body. On the other hand non-Christian bodies kept on representing to Government against relaxing the ban

11 The promulgation of the Constitution was soon followed by the entry into Surguja and Udaipur of the Belgian Jesuits, the Lutherans and some other Missions, who had hitherto worked from the Ranchi district. Strong action was taken by these

Mission authorities to spread Christianity amongst Uraons. Having firmly and perpetually installed themselves in the State of Jashpur against the will of the then Rulers and owing to official pressure brought upon the Rulers by the foreign administration, it was used as a base of operations for further expansion into Udaipur and Surguja territories. The Priests had earlier commenced their operations by sending Christians into the country who concealed the fact that they were Christians and took service as field labourers or lived with relations. When in course of time a sufficient number of such people had taken up their residence in the area the Preachers went into the country and appointed assistants from amongst the Christians who had gone to live there and a mass movement of conversion to Christianity ensued. Reports started pouring in upon the Government that these Pracharaks and other paid servants were mere pawns in the hands of the Priests, they acted as Vakils for the people in all matters and interfered continually in all temporal affairs. The Catholic, Lutheran and Swedish Churches soon established centres all along the Surguja-Bihar border. In 1950, branches were opened at Ambikapur and Sitapur in the Surguja district. The authorities reported to Government that the method adopted by Christian Missionaries was as follows —

After preliminary investigation by a responsible (usually foreign) member of a Mission they would establish themselves in a small village and try to gain the confidence of the village people. They would gradually start advising the village folk in their local problems and very often make out applications and complaints to be presented to the authorities. They would personally follow the matter in courts and thus gain the confidence of the party. Selected Uraon boys would be sent out with the help of scholarships to the Missionary headquarters in Jashpur or Bihar for training in handicrafts or for higher education. Meanwhile earlier converts from Bihar would be brought down to the Centres to move amongst the village folk to propagate the benefits of conversion. Local intelligent villagers (in many cases Muslims) would then be selected and appointed as Pracharaks on a pay of about Rs 50 per month. These paid Pracharaks would move in the country-side doing propaganda, paving the way for the Missionaries to tackle responsible individuals in nearabout villages. Meanwhile recent converts at the Centre would receive special attention, new clothes, personal advice on agriculture, free chemical manures and attention at home to make the houses look distinct from others in the village. They would open schools wherein only prospective converts would be admitted. Free medicine would be distributed on bazar days prospective converts being treated free while others were charged. They would make arrangements to distribute paddy and other seeds free to certain selected families. In some cases cash grants were also reported to have been given. Loans were advanced and the borrower was

told directly or indirectly that if he became a convert he need not repay the money. Thus, by the system of preferential treatment and with temporary physical benefits displayed before them an atmosphere in favour of conversion was being created. In some cases reports of coercive methods being used were also received.

12 As Missionary activities spread in Surguja district local non-Christians got alarmed. In 1952, leading citizens of the district, including the Maharaja of Surguja distributed pamphlets and addressed gatherings advising the Adivasis not to give up their religion for the sake of monetary benefits or temptations. Members of the Rashtriya Swayam Sewak Sangh and the Arya Samaj joined hands and intensified propaganda against Missionary activities. The services of a large number of enthusiastic workers could be secured by them and reconversions took place in some numbers. A conference of Virat Hindu Rashtriya Sammelan was convened at Ambikapur where all non-Christian organisations were asked to present a united front against the Christians and the Jharkhand movement. Thus, acute tension prevailed in the area and the authorities thought that the situation may result in serious trouble unless handled properly.

13 This tension was attributed chiefly to the objectionable methods followed by Missionaries, some of which may be narrated. On 5th May, 1951 at about 8 p.m. in village Chando, Rev. K. C. Burdett, a foreign Missionary took out a procession with about 25 followers in a truck and moved into some villages, singing provocative songs denouncing the Hindu religion. The matter was reported to the police and an offence was registered. As Shri Burdett offered an unconditional written apology the case was not prosecuted. In village Salba, Police Station Baikunthpur, 16 Christian Preachers entered the house of one Charan Uraon on 7th November, 1952, threw away his utensils and threatened him with violence, because he had opposed conversion. These persons were prosecuted and each of them was convicted. On another occasion in the same village, recently-appointed Christian Pracharaks, as alleged, used threats and intimidation against local Uraons for which they were prosecuted under section 506, Indian Penal Code. Reports of the use of violence and threats by a group of recently-appointed Pracharaks were received from other villages in the area and offences were registered. Rev. J. C. Christy, head of a Mission with headquarters in Palamau district who was organising centres in the Surguja district adjoining Palamau district, was also reported to have indulged in smuggling rice to Bihar in contravention of Government orders and to have assaulted public servants who tried to check the smuggling activities. Cases were registered against him and he was prosecuted. In both these cases he has recently been convicted. Another case of a village Headman was reported in which the Headman complained that when he had gone to village Amadoli near Madguri to make enquiries about new arrivals Lutia

and other Christians of the village caught hold of the Headman and snatched his dress and beat him. A report was made to the police and investigation was started. The four Christians concerned were convicted in a court of law. In connection with this case Rev F Ekka of the Catholic Ashram made a false complaint against the Head Constable who had investigated the case. Ekka's complaint was investigated by the Sub-Divisional Officer, Police, Ramanujganj, and was found to be entirely false, presumably made to gain favour of the Uraon converts and to discourage police officers from performing their duties.

14 Besides these criminal offences registered and investigated numerous ordinary complaints made by villagers against the objectionable activities of Christian Missionaries were presented to the district authorities at Ambikapur. Some of them may be enumerated here —

Thirteen villagers of village Dhajji and Sukhari, Police Station Samri, complained against Patras Kerketta of the Roman Catholic Mission along with other Piacharaks who addressed a meeting in the village stating that the Congress Raj was bad because it was giving trouble to the Christian people, that Christians were getting a Raj in which people would get all facilities. They asked the villagers to refrain from paying Malguzari dues to Government, cut the Government forest, assault officers who would check them and also to beat the persons who refused to join hands with them. He asked them to unite together against Government and threatened that those who did not co-operate would be turned out of the villages when Christians got Jhar-Khand. Complaints against Rev Kerketta were made to the authorities at different times by the villagers of Mandwa, Nawadikalan, Karcha, Khujuridi, Shahapur and Kandri. It was brought to the notice of the local officials that Patras Kerketta had baptized two Uraon babies when their grandmother had taken them for getting medicine for some eye trouble. Apprehending a breach of the peace the Sub-Divisional Officer, Ramanujganj held a spot enquiry. According to the wishes of the villagers the babies were reconverted to Hindu religion and Patras Kerketta tendered an apology to the Additional District Magistrate.

15 Instances also came to the notice of the authorities to show that Missionaries deliberately put up false and frivolous complaints against Government servants, so that the activities of the Missionaries could be carried on without being brought to the notice of the higher authorities. Enquiries were made by superior officers on all complaints made by the Missionaries and invariably most of them were found to be baseless. A few instances may be mentioned.

Rev Kerketta reported to the Sub-Divisional Officer (Police), Ramanujganj, on 20th March 1950 against Head Constable, Devraj of Police Station Samri, alleging that two recently converted Uraons had been beaten by the Head Constable and hand-cuffed.



Whereas, Mission activities were confined to only three villages prior to 1951, it was extended to 23 villages of Surguja district where large number of conversions took place

17 We may refer to Rev. Christy's case in some detail, because soon after he was detected smuggling rice to Bihar and a case was started against him, he made numerous complaints to authorities all over India, and there was intense press propaganda in foreign countries about the treatment meted out to Christians in Madhya Pradesh. The Government of Madhya Pradesh had prohibited export of rice from the border States to the neighbouring States of Bihar and Orissa. This order had been issued in the year 1950 when the foodgrain position in India was not very satisfactory. For enforcement of this order, outposts had been established throughout the border in important villages and it was the duty of the Government servants concerned to prevent smuggling. From the very large number of cases started against persons, it appeared that smuggling was going on on a large scale. On 14th April, 1952 a servant or nominee of Rev. Christy was caught by the Naka staff carrying rice to Bihar. A letter written by Rev. Christy dated 14th April, 1952 was found in possession of the servant. In that letter Rev. Christy stated that he had purchased rice worth Rs. 24 for sending it to his village in Bihar district. This letter was found inside the rice bag which was seized by the Naka staff. Rev. Christy admitted before the Magistrate having written the letter and having arranged to get rice. His defence was that he had applied for a permit to the Deputy Commissioner, Surguja, on 5th March, 1952 and that he had been orally assured by the Extra-Assistant Commissioner in charge that the permit would be sent to Rev. Christy in due course. Rev. Christy, therefore, pleaded that he came in possession of the rice believing that he would secure a permit. The Magistrate found that the application given by Rev. Christy for permit had been rejected by the Deputy Commissioner and that no assurance was ever given to Rev. Christy by any one. He was accordingly convicted. In another case Rev. Christy along with two others was prosecuted under section 7 of the Essential Supplies (Temporary Powers) Act, read with section 2 (1) (a) of the Foodgrains Export Restriction Order, 1943, for exporting a bag of rice from this State to the adjoining State of Bihar. They were also prosecuted under section 332, Indian Penal Code, for causing injury to a public servant. In this case too they were found guilty and convicted. According to the prosecution this incident happened on 27th February, 1952. Rev. Christy's defence was that the case had been falsely started because he assisted Christians in the villages in his jurisdiction in lodging complaints against the high-handedness and harassment by the Naka staff. It is apparent that Rev. Christy's complaints were not restricted to the Naka staff only but to other authorities as well. The National Christian Council of Nagpur asked Mr. P. Lobo, Advocate, to visit the area concerned and to look into the matter concerning the



prosecutions against Rev Christy. The following is the substance of complaints which the National Christian Council made to the Prime Minister of India —

“It is stated that Christian Missionaries are being harassed in Madhya Pradesh. In view of the numerous instances of this kind, the National Christian Council, Nagpur, asked Mr. P. Lobo, Advocate, of Nagpur, to make an enquiry into this matter. Mr. P. Lobo has made an enquiry and has submitted a report. Mr. Lobo gives many instances of harassment by local officials and frivolous charges and often of fabricated evidence. One particular case viz., the case of Rev J. C Christy and two others of village Jodhpur was pointed out as an outstanding example of harassment. They are being prosecuted on framed up charges of smuggling rice in contravention of Food Control Regulations. According to Mr. Lobo the case of Mr. Christy is typical of several such instances of harassment by local officials. The fact that in a very large number of cases the persons concerned have been charged with the same offence, viz., smuggling of rice, lends colour to the view that this resemblance is not without significance.”

18. The Government of Madhya Pradesh got an official enquiry made as to whether there had been any differentiation or harassment of Christian population or of Christian Missionaries and whether the allegations made by Mr. Lobo were correct. A reference to Rev Christy's case was also made by Raj Kumari Amrit Kaur in her letter, dated 9th October, 1952, to the Chief Minister, Madhya Pradesh, in course of which she stated that various complaints of discontent, prevailing in Madhya Pradesh against the Christian community, had come which had rather perturbed her. Along with this letter she enclosed letters from Rev. Christy and Shri Lobo to her and also Rev Christy's memorandum on the persecution of Christians in Surguja district. After careful enquiry Government found that the complaints made by Rev. Christy directly or through Shri Lobo and the National Christian Council had no basis whatsoever. in fact. All the allegations of discrimination and harassment were totally false. They found that the allegations had been clearly magnified and what was being done in the ordinary process of law was given the shape of deliberate harassment so as to conceal the objectionable activities of Rev. Christy and other Missionaries in the areas concerned. Government noticed that a considerable amount of discontent and resentment prevailed amongst the local population of the Surguja district over the anti-religious and anti-national activities of Christian Missionaries engaged in efforts to gain a foothold in the Surguja district which was hitherto a closed ground for them. Government had received representations from almost all members of the Legislative Assembly and other respectable citizens in this behalf and public opinion was being organized. A pamphlet was issued under the signature of the Maharaja of Surguja and other leading citizens of

Ambikapur town in which an appeal was made to the people to be cautious against the activities of the Missionaries. The Maharaja of Surguja had written to Government in October, 1952 protesting against the political activities carried on by the Missionaries in the name of religion and exploitation of the rural Adivasis.

19. It will thus be seen that whereas on the one hand an impression was being created all over India at the instance of foreign Missionaries engaged in the Udaipur and Surguja States that the Madhya Pradesh Government was following a policy of discrimination or harassment of the Christian population and Missionaries, on the other hand numerous complaints were being received of the objectionable activities of these foreign Missionaries, especially in the tribal areas and public resentment was mounting up. Government was not clear whether the agitation was confined only to the newly-merged States or whether other areas of Madhya Pradesh where the Missions were working were also affected. It must be noticed that about 30 different Missions are working in Madhya Pradesh with varying number of centres in each district. Almost the entire Madhya Pradesh is covered by Missionary activities and there is hardly any district where a Mission of one denomination or the other is not operating in some form or the other. More than half the people of Madhya Pradesh (57.4 per cent) consist of members of the Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and other Backward Classes and it is amongst these that Missionary activities are mostly confined. The background of Missionary activities in the old Madhya Pradesh and the merged States was repeatedly brought to Government's notice as a warning to be taken notice of and the almost similar methods adopted by the Roman Catholic and other Missions in the new areas of Surguja and Udaipur States was reported to be of great significance. Missionaries had vehemently denied allegations of proselytism and anti-national activities and had levelled charges against local officials whenever enquiries were made by such officers. In respect of authorities outside Madhya Pradesh these Missionaries also complained against the attitude of the Madhya Pradesh Government and vile propaganda against the Government was carried on in the foreign press. In these circumstances Government decided to get the matter examined thoroughly through an open and public enquiry and our Committee came to be appointed.

## CHAPTER III—CASTES AND TRIBES OF MADHYA PRADESH

As Missionary activity in Madhya Pradesh is confined mostly to members of certain Tribes and to certain border areas, it is desirable to have an idea of some of the important Tribes, their occupations, characteristics and social customs. In subsequent chapters we shall deal with the Missions working amongst these Tribes and the history of their advent and progress amongst these Adivasis.

2 We shall first refer to the important aboriginal Tribes of Uraon, Baiga, Marias and the Gonds. Before doing so, it may be useful to remember that the Aboriginal Tribes mostly called Adiwasis or Adimjatis claim to be the original inhabitants of India. The Aryans who came into the country subsequently, gradually pushed them back from the fertile lands of the Indo-Gangetic plain into forests and hilly tracts of the areas on the borders of the present States of Bengal, Bihar, Orissa and Madhya Pradesh. Even in these areas, exploitation of the simple-minded and illiterate aboriginals continued by the Jamindars, the businessmen and other communities. Loans at exorbitant rates of interest were advanced, agricultural produce was purchased at cheap rates, forced or free labour was taken and land made cultivable after years of toil, was taken back on one pretext or the other. By this process the aboriginals were gradually pushed further and further back into the jungle areas, and practically no attempt to improve the educational, medical, mental or economic conditions of the aboriginals was ever made. The first positive step was taken by the British Government in the 19th century after important aboriginal rebellions in the Santhal Parganas of Bengal and the Ranchi district of Bihar, and a special law was enacted forbidding sale of land by an aboriginal to a non-aboriginal and other protective measures were introduced. With the idea of encouraging the uplift of aboriginals and possibly with the motive of encouraging their conversion to Christianity, Christian Missionaries were encouraged to open schools and hospitals in the Tribal areas and till a few years ago these Christian schools and dispensaries were the only ones in the hilly Adiwasi country in addition to a few institutions which the Government had established. The Christian Missionaries did their work with considerable devotion and selflessness and brought about many conversions in spite of the deep-rooted Tribal tradition and Tribal customs. One noticeable effect of this long association of Christian Missionaries with the Tribal people to the exclusion of other sections of the community has been that the aboriginals have come to look upon the Hindus as hostile to their interests and the Christian Missionaries as their friends.

3 How simple-minded and capable of being duped easily the Tribals are, will be apparent from some of the Tribes whose characteristics and customs we have studied in some detail. The Uraons, according to the 1941 Census, were 1,64,731 in number. It is a Diavadian Tribe inhabiting the Koiba Zamindari of Bilaspur district, the former States of Udaipur and Jashpur in the Raigarh district and the Suiguja district. In the Koiba Zamindari, in Udaipur and Jashpur, they are mostly found in the plains, whereas in the Suiguja district they mostly reside in jungles and on the hills. In the more settled areas they have taken to regular cultivation, but in the Suiguja district the main occupation of the Uraons still continues to be hunting and gathering of fruits, although attempts are being made by Government to make them settle down in plains and to follow modern methods of agriculture. The Uraons have no sub-castes among them. They have numerous Gotras after the names of plants, trees, animals and birds, etc. Marriage within the Gotra is not permissible. They use very simple dress mostly of cloth prepared by the village weaver. Their staple food is rice and dal with such meat as may be available through hunting. In marriages and other social customs and habits they follow the conventional practices of the Hindus. Liquor plays a very important part in their festivities. It will be interesting to note that the Roman Catholics had a greater number of converts because they did not insist on prohibiting consumption of liquor, whereas the Lutherians, who at one time advocated Prohibition, could secure a small number of converts only.

4 The Baigas are found in the Dindori tahsil of Mandla district, Baihar tahsil of Balaghat district and part of Bilaspur district adjoining the Mandla district. It is one of the most primitive Tribes of India and the Baigas are generally interested in 'bewar' cultivation on the slopes of the hills or on the hill-tops. The Baiga is a good hunter, who loves his bow and arrow. Besides hunting another occupation is the gathering of wild fruits. He occasionally prepares baskets and bamboo mattings. He is generally shy of civilized man and dresses scantily. Bodies are tattooed from head to foot and women take delight in wearing brass ornaments and necklaces of coloured beads.

5 The Marias are members of another primitive Tribe found in the Chanda and Bastar districts. Hunting is their important vocation on which they occasionally spend months together. Wild-fruit gathering is undertaken to supplement their food and also for purposes of barter for salt, iron, etc. We were not able to pay a visit to the territories inhabited by Marias, but we were informed authoritatively that there are practically no converts to Christianity from this Tribe.

6 The most numerous of the aboriginal Tribes, the Gonds, reside in Sanjari-Balod and Bemetara tahsils of Durg district, Baihar tahsil of Balaghat district and throughout the Mandla-

Raipur, Chhindwara, Betul, Chanda and Bilaspur districts. They are mostly agriculturists although some are landless labourers. Fruit gathering and collection of Tendu leaves form their sources of subsidiary income. At one time they were Rulers of Gondwana and consequently an aristocratic section of the Gonds has arisen. Hindu rites and customs in respect of marriages and observance of festivals are followed, Holi, Daseira, Diwali and Shivaratri are observed and they dress like other Hindus.

7 Whether the aboriginal Tribes are Hindus or not has been a question of great controversy. The Missionaries have throughout claimed that they are not Hindus. A continuous attempt has been made by these organizations to foster a sense of separateness amongst the Tribes from the rest of the Hindus.

8 Speaking about the separation of the aborigines from the mass of the Indian population Gandhiji remarked: "We were strangers to this sort of classification—animists—aborigines, etc., but we have learnt it from the English rulers." To the question put by Dr. Chesterman whether Gandhiji's objection applied to areas like the Kond hills where the aboriginal races were animists, the unhesitating reply was, "yes, it does apply, because I know that in spite of being described as animists these tribes have from times immemorial been absorbed in Hinduism. They are, like the indigenous medicine, of the soil, and their roots lie deep there" (Pages 192 and 299 Christian Missions Navajivan Press)

9 Gandhiji's statement is amply borne out by the researches of scholars like the late M. M. Kunte who wrote a thesis on "The Vicissitudes of Indian Civilization" in 1880. In the introduction he says: "Buddhism was a revolution caused by the energy of the aboriginal races". While discussing the social changes during the Acharya period he says "intermarriages between the Aryas and the Shudras, Kolis and other aborigines were frequent". "The Vjasneys sanhita" considers the growth of the mixed classes an evil and condemns it, but the mixed classes gradually acquired power and influence in the State. At the time of the Mahabharat such great men as "Vyas" and "Vidur" were the offsprings of the connection of the Aryan with the aborigines. Satyawati, who was the daughter of the Koli chieftain became the queen of King Shantanu. Dhritrashtra, Pandu and Vidur were the offsprings of Vyas. At that time no stain was attached to intermarriages between the Aryas and the aborigines. Bhima married Hecdimba and Arjun married Naga girl called Ullupi. A class of Aryas called Upakrishta was created. Upakrishta means those who were admitted to the privilege of performing a sacrifice. (Pages 252-253 *ibid*)

10 The Nishadas were an aboriginal tribe. They were sometimes included in the Pancha-Janah, i.e., the five-fold Aryas. Gradually the Nishadas were incorporated. (Page 254 *ibid*)

11 As to the evolution of castes it has to be noticed that among the various ways in which they came to be formed was

the absorption of the tribes into the Hindu social system as stated in the 'Imperial Gazetteer of India' 1907, Volume I page 314. Where a tribe has insensibly been converted into a caste it preserved its original name and customs but modified its animistic practices more and more in the direction of orthodox Hinduism. Numerous examples of this process are to be found all over India and it has been at work for centuries.

12. We may quote here the well-known verse about the mixed origin of those who are honoured as religious leaders in Hindu society. It is as follows —

“जानो व्यागन्तु कृत्यां  
 न्व पात्रायन्त्य पत्रयः  
 युत्वा नुत कणादायन्त्ययोदृष्ट  
 गुतो भवन् ..... ”

(Bhavisya Mahapurana Chapter 12) Valmiki the author of the Epic Ramayan and Hanuman the so called monkey God were also aborigines.

13. The process by which this transformation takes place is as follows. The leading men of an aboriginal tribe having somehow got on in the world and become landed proprietors manage to enrol themselves in one of the most distinguished castes. They usually set up as Rapputs and their first step is to consult a Brahmin to discover for them a mythical ancestor of some great Rapput Community. By the process of inter marriages they come to be absorbed in the fullest sense of the word and are locally accepted as high class Hindus. (Imperial Gazetteer of

15 In 1911 Sir E. A. Gait, the Commissioner of the Census remarked that because a man sought the help of a Brahmin priest or made offerings at a Hindu shrine, it did not follow that he had given up the last shreds of his inherited animistic beliefs and that owing to the gradual nature of the process of Hinduizing it was extremely difficult to say at what stage a man should be regarded as having become a Hindu (Census of India, 1911, India, Volume I, Part I, pages 129-130). Sir A. J. Baines wrote in 1912 in his *Ethnography*, pages 8 and 9, "one of the most interesting ethnographical questions entering into the census enquiry is that of the rate at which Brahminism is, in name at least absorbing the animistic tribal population." In order to solve the practical difficulty which the census officers had to face he used the term "tribal animism" or "tribal religion" for the religion returned under the tribal name, by those who did not adhere to any of the wider creeds. In the year 1921 Mr. P. C. Tallents, the Superintendent of the Census Operations in Bihar and Orissa and Mr. Sedgwick, the Superintendent of the Census in Bombay were faced with the difficulty of distinguishing a Hindu from an animist, and Mr. Sedgwick recommended in unequivocal terms that animism as a religion should be entirely abandoned and that all those hitherto classed as animists should be grouped with the Hindus (Census of India, 1921—Bihar and Orissa Report, page 125, and Bombay Report, page 67). Mr. J. T. Maaten, the Commissioner of Census having been impressed by their views changed the religious division of animism of the previous censuses into that of tribal religion, but he at the same time was not satisfied about that way of solving the problem, for he remarked "If the word animism is vague in respect of what it connotes, the term "tribal religion" is not by any means definite in what it denotes" (Census of India, 1921, India Report, Volume I, Part I, page 111).

16 In 1931 Dr. J. H. Hutton, the Commissioner of Census, retained the heading "tribal religion" in the body of the report, but used that term in contradistinction to Hindu, Muslim, Christian, etc., in the tables at the end of the chapter on religion. Although he isolated the tribal people in this way, he admitted that the line between Hinduism and tribal religion was difficult to draw, and that the inclusion of the latter within the Hindu fold was easy (Census of India, 1931, India Report, Volume I, Part I, page 397).

17 Mr. W. H. Shoobert, the Superintendent of the Census of 1931 for the Central Provinces and Berar also referred to the difficulty of obtaining satisfactorily accurate returns of those who retained their tribal creeds but deliberately returned themselves as Hindus for the reason that it would elevate them in the social scale, whereas to the more simple of the tribals the term "Hindu" conveyed no connection with any religion but merely indicated a race. He also was impressed by the fact that "there was much in the religion of each which could easily be assimilated to that of the other". But he thought that it would be incorrect to class the

Hinduized aboriginal with the ordinary Hindu villager of the Central Provinces, for although after centuries of varying degrees or contacts each may have assimilated ideas and customs from the other, their cultures are most obviously distinct (Census of India, 1931, Central Provinces and Berar Report, Volume XII, Part I, pages 397 and 333) It may be mentioned here that Mr W V Grigson, I C S, agreed with Dr V Elwin's opinion that the religion of the Indian aboriginal outside Assam should be regarded as the religion of the Hindu family, and that for purposes of Census, all aborigines should be classed as Hindus by religion (page 8, The Aboriginal Problem in the Central Provinces and Berar)

18 It is not easy to find any sound reason for isolating the tribal people from the Hindus in view of the repeated admissions made that the animistic or tribal religion was hardly distinguishable from the Hindu religion. The mystery is solved when we come to examine the Missionary activities within these tribal areas

19 Mr Stent, who was Deputy Commissioner of Amravati sent a note to the Census Officer to say that the educated Indian officers of Government maintained that Gonds, Korkus, Bhils, Gowans and Banjaras were Hindus, and he himself conceded that when members of these tribes settled in a Hindu village they become Hindus. He commented on the tendency of Hinduism to absorb the religion of other people, and also pointed out that the aboriginals returned themselves as Hindus to escape from the taint of barbarism and to raise themselves in the social scale (Census Report, Central Provinces and Berar, 1931, Volume XII, Part I, page 329)

20 Viewing the problem from the point of view of caste, it would appear that the process was similar to that of religion. In 1891 Baines arranged the castes according to their traditional occupations, viz, under the category of Agricultural and Pastoral castes he formed a sub-heading and named it forest tribes. That indicates that the forest dwellers were not excluded from the description of the caste.

21 In the next two censuses, i.e., of 1901 and 1911, Sir Herbert Risley and Sir E A Gait included the so-called animists in the table for castes along with others, indicating against each the number following Hinduism or Animism or some other religion (Ghurye, page 7)

22 In 1921 Mr Marten followed the same practice, only changing the heading of Animism to Tribal religion. In 1931 Dr Hutton substituted the term "Primitive Tribes" for "Forest Tribes" and added a special appendix on "Primitive Tribes" giving their names and numbers

23 In the Census of 1941 there was a sharp departure from the previous one of 1931. The heads were counted community-wise instead of on the basis of religion. To elucidate the matter,





## PART II

### CHAPTER I—MISSIONS IN MADHYA PRADESH AND INDIA

Missionary organisations are so wide-spread in this country that they seem to constitute “a State within the State” The Roman Catholic Church is a highly centralised organisation, spread over all the world with power concentrated in the Pope, who, in the words of Pope Leo XIII (in the encyclical letter, dated June 20, 1894) “holds upon this earth the place of God Almighty” Hence he is crowned with a Triple Crown as King of Heaven and of the Earth and of the Lower Regions

2 As regards the Protestants, they were divided into various national churches which sent out Missionaries as limbs of “National Imperialisms” (World Politics in Modern Civilization by Barnes, page 273) They are numerous and on the whole the number of denominations is not decreasing but increasing (page 21, Elements of Ecumenism) Hence in their case, centralisation was necessary to fight on two fronts viz., religious nationalism of the country which they assail and Communism which they want to defend themselves against With all this effort on centralisation, the Roman Catholic Church, the Orthodox Church of the Byzantine tradition and the oriental National Churches described as the Monophysites, the Unitarian Churches of England and America have refused to enter the fellowship of World Council of Churches with its headquarters at Geneva and on the other hand it has to meet violent and growing opposition from the International Council of Christian Churches and another fundamentalist group, viz., the World Evangelical Fellowship (pages 18 to 20, The Elements of Ecumenism)

3 The Evangelical aim of the World Council of Churches is the International Missionary Council The National Christian Council of India, which was formerly known as the National Missionary Council, came to be organised in 1914 as the result of the First World Missionary Conference held in Edinburgh in 1910 and is affiliated to the International Missionary Council which has its offices in London and New York It is a constituent member of the International Missionary Council It is established on the acceptance of the principle that the Church is central in the Christian enterprise, that the local congregation is basic to its life and witness and that evangelism is its primary task Among its various functions are—

- (1) to consult the International Missionary Council regarding such matters as call for consideration or action,
- (2) to communicate and co-operate with the National Christian Councils of other countries which are members of the International Missionary Council and with other similar bodies in matters affecting the Christian enterprise as a whole.

4 In India there are Regional Christian Councils in 14 places, viz., Andhra, Assam, Bengal, Bihar, Bombay, Hyderabad, Karnatak, Kerala, Tamil-Nad, Mid-India, North-West India, Santhal, United Provinces and Utkal

5 The foreign personnel in India now numbers 4,877, an excess of 500 on the returns for 1951. The increased personnel has occurred in the smaller Missions, most of which do not yet have any organised churches associated with them. (Compiler's Introduction, Christian Hand-Book, of India 1954-55)

6 In Madhya Pradesh, there are Indian personnel 251 and foreign 402 (page 210 *ibid*)

7 The institutions which are conducted by the Protestant Missions can be divided under five heads as follows —

- (i) Economic,
- (ii) Educational,
- (iii) Evangelistic.
- (iv) Medical,
- (v) Philanthropic and General

Under (i) Economic, fall the following —

- (a) agricultural settlements,
- (b) co-operative societies,
- (c) printing presses,
- (d) literature distributing centres,
- (e) miscellaneous industries

Under (ii) Educational—

- (a) colleges,
- (b) high schools,
- (c) middle schools,
- (d) teachers' training institutions,
- (e) industrial schools,
- (f) schools for Missionaries' children

Under (iii) Evangelistic—

- (a) theological colleges and seminaries,
- (b) pastoral and evangelistic workers training institutions,
- (c) Bible correspondence course,
- (d) Christian Ashrams

Under (iv) Medical—

- (a) hospitals,
- (b) dispensaries,
- (c) leprosy institutions,
- (d) tuberculosis sanatorium, and

Under (v) Philanthropic and General—

- (a) homes for the blind and deaf, etc
- (b) homes for women,
- (c) homes for converts,
- (d) orphanages,
- (e) social and welfare organisations,
- (f) Missionary homes of rest,
- (g) Christian retreat and study centres

A statement giving particulars about Protestant Christian Missions operating in Madhya Pradesh and the institutions conducted by the several Missions is to be found in Appendix 3

## CHAPTER II—HISTORY OF CHRISTIAN MISSIONS, WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO OLD MADHYA PRADESH AND THE MERGED STATES

The present aims and objects of Missionary activity in some parts of Madhya Pradesh can best be understood against the background of history. The advent of Christianity in India is shrouded in myth and tradition. Tradition assigns the origin of the most ancient Christian community in India, called the Syrian Christians to the preaching of St. Thomas, the Apostle.

2 The spread of the Christianity in India may be considered under four definite periods, viz.

- (1) The Syrian Period
- (2) The Roman Catholic Period under Portuguese domination
- (3) The Protestant Period under British domination
- (4) The Modern Period

### The Syrian Period

3 Long before Christ there had been commerce between Europe and India not only by caravans which took the land route through Persia, but also by ships down the Red Sea or the Persian Gulf. In fact, the foreign trade of India is as old as her history. Relics found in Sumeria and Egypt point to a traffic between these countries and India as far back as 3000 B.C. Commerce between India and Babylon by the Persian Gulf flourished from 700 to 480 B.C. Rome in her halcyon days depended upon India for spices and perfumes as well as silks, brocades, muslins and cloth of gold. The Parthian wars were fought by Rome largely to keep open the trade route to India. Even in later times Europe looked upon the Hindus as experts in every line of manufacture—woodwork, ivory-work, metal-work, bleaching, dyeing, tanning, soap-making, glass-blowing, gun powder, fire works, cement, etc. (Page 479, *Story of Civilization* by Durant)

4 St. Thomas Christians (or followers of the Church of the East) in small numbers began to visit Malabar frequently for trade purposes, and some of them settled there. During the Decian and Diocletian persecutions many Christians living in the Eastern Province of the Roman Empire fled to Persia and joined the Church in that Country. Nestorius, bishop of Constantinople (A.D. 428—431) who denied the hypostatic union and maintained the existence of the two distinct natures in Christ, was condemned and deposed for “heresy” at the Council of Ephesus in 431 A.D. His followers, the Nestorians, were persecuted with such vigour that they were forced to leave the Empire and by the time of Justinian (A.D. 527) it was difficult to find a church within the whole Roman Empire that shared the views of Nestorians. The exiled Nestorians joined the Church in Persia.

5 Between the Fifth and the Ninth centuries Nestorian expansion was phenomenal. The Nestorian traders brought to Malabar several colonies of Christians from Persian lands during this period. These colonists had their own priests and deacons and a bishop from Persia. As the years rolled on these early colonies adapted themselves to the ways of the Hindus and learnt to maintain their racial purity. Even to this day the Syrian Christians claim that their community has remained unadulterated by proselytism.

### Advent of European Christianity

6 The first Latin Christian Missionary who is known to have visited India was John de Monte Corvino, afterwards Archbishop of Cambay in Cathay. Sent out by Pope Nicholas IV as a Missionary to China, he on his way to China halted in India about the year 1291. He remained in the country for thirteen months, and baptised in different places about one hundred people. The next Latin Missionary of whom we find mention is a French Dominican Friar named Jordanus. About the year 1323 or earlier with other Friars, both Dominican and Franciscan, he found his way to the Bombay coast where it is said his companions were put to death by Muslims. This was the period when Christianity was unable to stand against the overwhelming forces of Islam.

7 By the close of the Thirteenth century these European Missionaries were able to create a chain of Christian colonies on the Western coast of India, between Thana (Bombay) and Quilon (Travancore). Stimulated by the fear of Muslims, particularly Mongols, Rome got reconciled to many things which it did not like, and a Christian unity was established. In the early years of the Fourteenth century a complete Persian hierarchy was created with a Metropolitan whose seat was at a town south of the Caspian sea and whose jurisdiction extended over Persia, India, Ethiopia and Central Asia.

### The Roman Catholic period under the Portuguese Dominion

8 The Missionary work of Western Christendom began with the arrival of the Portuguese in 1498. This should be considered the beginning of the aggressive Missionary Era of the Catholic Church in India. In 1498 Vasco da Gama anchored off Calicut, but on that occasion he had no intercourse with Christians. When he visited India a second time in 1502, he was surprised to find a Christian community on the western coast of India. These Christians welcomed him and applied to him for assistance against their Muslim neighbours. Large numbers of monks were sent to India with the Portuguese fleets, and Goa soon became the centre of a vigorous missionary enterprise. By now the Portuguese strategy of establishing the Protectorate of the King of Portugal over the Christians of the Malabar coast had become successful.

9 Although in the sphere of trade and commerce the Portuguese on the West coast made very substantial progress, no great success was at first achieved in their missionary endeavours. The King of Portugal, dissatisfied with the small progress made, applied to Ignatius Loyola to send the entire Jesuit Order to India. The motto of Portuguese adventure in India was "the service of God and our own advantage", and King Manuel was determined to use all available resources to achieve this object. Loyola could not grant the request, but in 1541 Francis Xavier, the greatest of all Jesuits, was sent to the East, and the day of his arrival may well be called the birthday of Roman Catholic Missions in India. He only spent about four and a half years in the country, but in that brief space of time he is said to have baptised about 60,000 people, nearly all from the fisherman castes, living on the South-West and South-East coasts of India. They poured en masse into the Church.

10 This mass movement work of the Jesuits was in fact an appeal to material interests. The Fishermen of the South-East coast were constantly raided by pirates. One of their fellow countrymen, living in Goa who had become Christian, persuaded them to apply for help to the Portuguese Viceroy. So a deputation was sent to Goa, and the Viceroy agreed to deliver them from their enemies on condition that the whole caste became Christian and subjects of the King of Portugal. The bargain was ratified by the baptism of all the delegates then and there. A fleet was sent, the pirates were dispersed, and the whole caste was baptised in a few weeks.

11 The impatient Xavier, still dissatisfied with the result of his labour wrote to the King of Portugal that the only hope of increasing the number of Christians was by the use of the secular power of the State. As a result of this note, the King issued orders that in Goa and other Portuguese settlements, "all idols shall be sought out and destroyed, and severe penalties shall be laid upon all such as shall dare to make an idol or shall shelter or hide a Brahmin". (Page 54 History of Missions Richter) He also ordered that special privileges should be granted to Christians in order that the natives may be inclined to submit themselves to the yoke of Christianity. (P 54—ibid)

12 In 1514 Pope Leo X granted to the Kings of Portugal the right of patronage over Churches and of nomination to all the Benefices which they would establish. In 1534 all trading stations from Bombay to Nagapatnam where the Portuguese flag was floating, soon became Catholic centres with resident Chaplains. Along the coast Franciscans had baptised some 20,000 Paravas (Fishermen) even before Xavier landed in India. Goa, the capital of Portuguese India, was made an Episcopal See. Now successive waves of invasions of India by Catholic Missionaries from the West were started besides the Jesuits in (1542) the Dominicans (in 1548), the Augustinians (in 1572) also arrived in India with the active support of the Portuguese Kings. By the middle of 1577 a Christian centre

was formed in Bengal by bands of Portuguese adventurers and an Augustinian Father and their slaves. Thus the Portuguese continued their work of "winning Indians for Christ their Lord" with the mighty sword in one hand and the crucifix in the other.

### Catholic expansion

13 In 1872 the Augustinians distributed their missionaries in Basem, Bengal and other parts. The Jesuits had been making determined efforts to reform the Syrian Church in accordance with Roman ideas and to bring it into subjection to the Pope. In 1594 a Jesuit Mission started from Goa to the court of Akbar the Mughal and they got his permission to establish Christian centres in Agra, Delhi and Lahore. The Catholic writers say that in 1600, after a century of Mission work the Church had gathered about 2,70,000 converts in India.

14 A new departure was made at the beginning of the seventeenth century by another great Jesuit Missionary. He was an Italian of noble birth, of great intellectual ability and devotion. He came to Madura, capital of a Hindu Kingdom, outside the jurisdiction of the Portuguese Viceroy. His name was Robert De Nobili. He saw that the policy of Xavier and other Catholic Fathers who were making mass conversions of lower castes by using the secular power of the State was disastrous. He clearly saw that unless the higher classes were won for Christ the Church was not going to drive her roots into the soil of India. So he at once threw over the policy of Xavier and struck out a line of his own.

15 Nobili appeared in Madura clad in the saffron robes of a Sadhu with sandal paste on his forehead and the sacred thread on his body from which hung a cross and took his abode in the Brahmin quarters. He thus attracted a large number of people. He gave out that he was a Brahmin from Rome. He showed documentary evidence to prove that he belonged to a clan of the parent stock that had migrated from ancient Aryavart and assured the members of the high castes that by becoming a Christian one did not renounce one's caste, nobility or usage. (Pages 65—70 Christians and Christianity in India and Pakistan). He learnt Tamil, Telugu and Sanskrit, and took up the Brahman style of living. He wrote in Sanskrit a Christian Sandhyavandanam for Brahmin converts. He declared that he was bringing a message which had been taught in India by Indian ascetics of yore and that he was only restoring to Hindus one of their lost sacred books, namely the 5th Veda, called Yeshurveda. It passed for a genuine work until the Protestant Missionaries exposed the fraud about the year 1840. (History of Missions, Richter, Page 57). In five years, from 1607 to 1611, he baptised 87 Brahmins. These conversions, then so marvellous, drew upon De Nobili the eyes of friend and foe alike. A big controversy raged among the Roman Catholic missionaries the world over for a considerable length of time. Much of the opposition could be explained by wounded pride on the Portuguese side. In 1622



Pope Gregory XV gave a bull in favour of De Nobili, declaring thus: We allow the present and future converts to wear the (Brahmin) thread and the tuft of hair as distinctive marks of race, social rank and office, to use sandal wood as ornament and to take ablutions as a matter of hygiene. This Brahman Sanyasi of the 'Roman Gotra', Father De Nobili, worked for 40 years and died at the ripe age of 89 in 1656. It is said that he had converted about a lakh of persons but they all melted away after his death.

By 1700 India had 6,00,000 of Catholics

16 The Catholic expansion continued. The French Jesuits, who had their headquarters in Pondicherry from 1700, passed it on to the Paris Foreign Mission Society in 1776. At Calcutta a Catholic chapel was erected in 1700. The Italian Capuchins penetrated into Tibet in 1713. Thus, a network of Roman Catholic Missions was spread all over India, from Tibet to Cape Comorin and from Punjab to Assam. Within two hundred years after the Portuguese landed in India, it is claimed the Catholic Church had 9,58,000 adherents in India (Catholic Directory, 1950).

### The Protestant period

17 The Missionary work of the Protestant Church began in India in 1706. Soon after the Dutch, the Danes entered India and established a number of factories on the eastern and western coasts of India. In 1706, German Lutherans, sent by King Frederick IV of Denmark, reached Tranquebar as Missionaries to the Danish Possession in India. Their work at first was mainly confined to the Danish and English settlements. Later they did a lot of preaching, teaching and Bible translation. Ziegenbalg, Grundler, Schwartz and others under the patronage of the King of Denmark were the pioneers of the Protestant Mission in India. The Danish Missionary Society in association with German Missions opened the era of Protestant Missionary enterprise in India. The Bible was translated into Tamil by them. They laid the foundations of the Church in the districts of Tinnevely, Trichinopoly, Tanjore and Madras.

### Anglican Missions

18 The Danes had scarcely commenced assuming political power when they were superseded by the British. The first English Mission established in India was that of the Baptists in Bengal. By the Charter of 1690 the East India Company was charged to see "All chaplains in the East India Service shall learn the language of the country in order that they may be better able to instruct the Gentoos, heathen servants and slaves of the Company and of its agents into Protestant religion" (page 102, Richter History of Missions in India). The S. P. C. K. appointed the Rev Clarke Keirnander's mission in Calcutta in 1789, but he left that position in 1791 and became a chaplain in the East India Company's service.

William Carey landed in Calcutta in November 1793, and established his headquarters at the Danish settlement at Serampore, a few miles north of Calcutta. In 1801, Lord Wellesley made him Master and Professor of Bengali, Marathi and Sanskrit, at the newly established college in Calcutta for training candidates for Government services. Thus, Carey's activities were extended to Calcutta. The Serampore trio, viz., Carey, Marshman and Ward were carrying on a vigorous crusade, pouring coarse and scurrilous invectives against both Hinduism and Islam. When a Mission tract in which Hazrat Mohammed was called an imposter had been brought to his notice, Lord Minto wrote to the Chairman of the East India Company in 1807 to say how the publications of the Serampore Press had the effect not to convert but to alienate the adherents of Hinduism and Islam. He said "pray read especially the miserable stuff addressed to the Hindus in which . . . without proof or argument of any kind pages are filled with hell fire denounced against the whole race of men, etc" (Parekh Christian Proselytism in India, page 126)

19 The Church of England prevailed upon the East India Company to appoint chaplains, and ardent evangelists like Henry Martyn were brought to India. The S P C K made financial grants to the German Missionaries in South India. In 1813, there was held in the Parliament the famous debate on the subject of sending out Missionaries to India. Mr Charles Marsh, a retired Barrister from Madras, opposed the measure in a vehement speech which ended with the peroration "What will have been gained to ourselves by giving them Calvinism and fermented liquors, and whether predestination and gin would be a compensation to the natives of India for the changes which will overwhelm their habits, morals and religion" (page 36, Volume II, Life and Times of Carey, Marshman, Ward by J C Marshman, 1859). In 1814, the C M S sent two clergymen to South India, and in 1816 two others to Bengal as regular Missionaries. In 1820 the Bishop's College in Calcutta was established "for instructing native and other Christian youth in the doctrine of the Church". With the arrival of Alexander Duff, the Scottish Missionary, 1830, a fresh epoch began in the history of the Protestant Missions.

20 Duff was confronted with the same position in Bengal that faced De Nobili at Madura two centuries earlier. The situation which the Missionaries had to face in the middle of the last century is well described by Captain Cunningham in the History of the Sikhs (1849) in these words "They cannot promise aught which their hearers were not sure of before the Pandit and the Mullah can each oppose dialectics to dialectics, morality to morality, and revelation to revelation. Our zealous preachers may create sects among themselves they may persevere in their laudable resolution of bringing up the orphans of heathen parents but it seems hopeless that they should ever Christianise the Indian and Mahomedan worlds" (pages 19-20). The Indian

Christians drawn nearly entirely from the lower castes were looked down upon and despised. It seemed impossible that they could be the evangelists of India. Dr Duff, therefore, conceived the plan of converting the Brahmans by means of English education saturated with Christian teaching and with the help of the English providing them with Government jobs. Dr Duff's example was followed by other Missionaries, and high schools and colleges were founded during the next fifty years in all parts of India with lavish aid from Government. The Government despatch of 1854 provided that the education imparted in the Government institutions should be exclusively secular. Canon Mozley, discussing the prospects of Christianity in the fifties of the last century, warmly supported the neutral attitude of the Government and argued that their "so-called Godless education left the Indian mind purged desiring to be filled. Several witnesses before the Parliamentary Committee of 1853 affirmed that Government schools were doing pioneer work for Christianity" (Mayhew Christianity and Government of India page 177). The underlying policy of the Educational Despatch was apparently that the Missionary institutions should impart the knowledge of Christian religion directly while the Government institutions were to do the same indirectly. With this object the Mission institutions came to receive grants as much as five times of all private institutions put together and they got control of almost all the secondary schools (ibid page 170). In the shaping of Government policy on education, there was a tendency to identify the interest of Government and Christian Mission. The Missions definitely included the education of all kinds and grades among their instruments for the evangelisation of India (ibid page 160).

21 With the increase of political power of the British in India, the Protestant Missionaries with the active support of the British Residents in the Native States established churches and Mission centres all over India. When the Indian War of Independence (called the Mutiny) broke out there were about 90 Missionary societies at work in India, in addition to the Missions of the Church of Rome, and their workers ordained and unordained, numbered over 2,600.

22. Two years after the Mutiny, Lord Palmerstone, Prime Minister, could say in public "It is not only our duty but in our own interest to promote the diffusion of Christianity as far as possible throughout the length and breadth of India" (page 194 ibid). The Secretary of State Lord Halifax appended the statement to it viz, "Every additional Christian is an additional bond of union with this country and an additional source of strength to the Empire" (page 194 ibid; and page 29 Missionary Principles and Practice by Speers). In 1876, there was a chorus of official praise when Lord Reay (Bombay) introducing to the Prince of Wales a Deputation of Indian Christians said, referring to the Missionaries, "They were doing for India more than all those

civilians, soldiers, judges and governors whom Your Highness has met" Sir Charles Eliot (Bengal) described their work as "an unrecognised and unofficial branch of the great movement that alone justifies British rule in India" Sir Macworth Young (Punjab) described them as "the most potent force in India" (page 194 Christianity and Government of India by Mayhew) During the first half of the nineteenth century there were a few converts from distinguished and talented families in India But in the latter half of that century there arose powerful movements of Arya Samaj, Brahma Samaj and Theosophy Great spiritual personalities like Dayanand, Ramkrishna and Vivekanand, Madam Blavatsky, Col Olcott appeared on the scene. This religious upheaval made all the attempts of the Missionaries among the intelligent classes wholly abortive In the eyes of the missionaries, Madam Blavatsky was an "arant cheat", Col Olcott "a credulous man", Dr. Beasant "a famous defender of materialism" . who could not be named in the same breath with honest students such as MaxMuller and Deussen who after profound research have arrived at a favourable judgment upon Hinduism", "Vivekanand was known for many years to be under the influence of the most adventurous Sanyasi", Ramkrishna Paramhansa whom Maxmuller raised to unmerited repute by the publication of his biography" Swami (Vivekananda) frequented American hotels, ate food prepared by white man, a shoodra appearing as the apostle of Hinduism (Richter pages 382, 384, 385 and 387)

23 The growth of the Protestant Church during the period of British Raj in India was due mainly to the great patronage and support the Church was getting from the Government of India. Instances of Land grants and financial aid to build Churches, missionary centres, hospitals, educational institutions etc, are numerous All Cathedrals entrusted to the Bishopricks under the Ecclesiastical establishments were built from State funds Not only in cities and towns and in military stations in British India, but in almost every Indian State we can find big Churches and Missionary buildings erected almost entirely with Government aid To protect the Christian converts and their inheritance in British India, Act XXI of 1850 was passed, as the then prevailing customary law stood as an impediment to conversion of Hindus to other religions All the concessions given to missions in about 350 major Anglican centres need not be mentioned in detail in our Report

24 In the Residency area of every State there stand to this day huge churches and other mission buildings for the construction of which lands and nearly all funds were contributed by the Ruler or Chief of that State at the instance of the English Residents or Political Agents This kind of patronage from a non-Christian country for evangelism within its territory is unique in the history of nations

25 The progress of Christianity up to the end of the first decade of this century was described by Sir Bamfylde Fuller (who like Sir Andrew Fraser had been a C. P. Officer before he went to Bengal as Governor) in these words Christianity has been offered to classes that have remained outside the pale of Hinduism, hill tribes and the lower strata of the cooly population. Among the higher and better educated classes evangelism has been less successful. It is surprising that Christianity has not spread more rapidly. For a century it has not only been preached in the streets but has been taught in numerous schools and colleges, it has behind it the prestige of the ruling race, and yet probably there are less than 2½ million native Christians in India, if we deduct those who owe their conversion to Nestorian Missions or to the Portuguese (pages 210, 364 Empire of India, 1913)

26 The number of Missionary Societies considerably increased about the middle of last century and they used to hold conferences in various centres in India viz Calcutta in 1855, Benaras in 1857, Ootacamund in 1858, Lahore in 1862, Allahabad in 1872 and Banagalore in 1879. During that period there was a tendency on the part of all the Missions to focus their activity particularly on the aborigines. They achieved unexpectedly great success among the Kols as in 1851 the number was only 31 it rose in 1861 to 2,400, in 1871 to 20,727 and in 1881 to the large figure of 44,024. In view of this success with the Kols the Missionaries pressed their work among other tribes as they realised that there was a movement on the part of the aborigines to raise themselves in the social level by adopting Hindu manners and customs, which would be taken advantage of to gather them into the Christian Church and thus "save them from the rapid onward march of Hinduism". (Richter History of Christian Mission pages 214-215)

27 For the purpose of understanding the vigorous and highly intensified Missionary activity concentrated in Surguja district after the merger of the States in 1947, it is necessary to cast a glance at the origin of Missionary enterprise at Ranchi, which can be gathered from the History of Chhota Nagpur. As far back as 1845 the Deputy Commissioner Mr Hanington invited four German Missionaries from Calcutta and their work began with some orphan children who had been handed over to them during famine. The number of converts to Christianity began to swell and the Gossner Evangelical Lutheran Mission began to extend its activities around Ranchi. The Gossner Mission operates in the territory formerly comprised in Jashpur, Surguja, Udaipur and Raigarh States. It has still its headquarters at Ranchi. Later on in 1885 they were joined by the Roman Catholic Mission.

28 Before 1948 the diocese of Ranchi included the territory which consisted of eight feudatory states, seven in the diocese of Ranchi and one in the diocese of Nagpur. Mission work was strictly forbidden in all those States. In 1907 however a great movement of conversion took place in Jashpur State, but for nine

years the Missionaries could not even erect a shed to live in. By and by five Mission stations were erected. Another movement of conversions took place in 1935 in Udaipur State. Till 1941 no priest or catechist was allowed to enter the State. From 1941 to 1949 the priest was allowed to go from outside the State to visit persons dangerously ill and four times a year to say mass. But he was prohibited from staying more than 48 hours in the State. With the integration and merger of the States in 1948 and the promulgation of the Constitution in 1950 full freedom was conceded to the Missionary activities. The diocese of Raigarh and Ambikapur was erected on the 13th of December, 1951 by being cut off from the diocese now Arch-Diocese of Ranchi. The diocese still forms part of the Ranchi Mission (1954 Catholic Directory page 264)

29 The work of these Missions was much facilitated by the economic and social problems which arose as a result of the permanent settlement made by Lord Cornwallis in 1793. As stated by E. De Meulder S. J. the Christian Mission could provide the aborigines with schools, colleges, hostels, hospitals and co-operatives of various sorts, but they could not give them lands, "for these belonged to the foreign sponsored permanent settlement of Rajahs and Zamindars or to the 'Laissez faire', 'liberal', zamindari regime inaugurated by Lord Cornwallis whose fatal signature meant the death of the ancient village republics" (page 1 Tribal India Speaks by E. De Meulder S. J.) Up to that time the custom was to regard the aboriginal as owner of the land in the forest which he reclaimed it and the Zamindars were only farmers of revenue. The cultivators had to render certain feudal services in return for the lands which they held.

30 In fact most of the Zamindars and Rajahs were tax collectors, never owners of the land, in the previous regimes, but after the permanent Settlement they claimed ownership in about the same way that the ancestors of British Landlordism had done at the time of the Reformation in England. (Page 63 Tribal India Speaks) The disputes between them and the Zamindars arose when the number of the aborigines embraced Christianity. In introducing the Bhupihar Bill in the Bengal Council on November 16, 1868 Mr. M. H. Dampier, I.C.S. quoted the following remarks of Col. Dalton.

"the Kols who embraced Christianity imbibed more independent notions, and in several instances successfully asserted their rights. From this the belief unfortunately spread through the district that when the Kols go to the Court as Christians they are more uniformly successful than those who have not changed their religion. It was stated in the report on the Census of India 1911 Volume V, page 220 "Another attraction is the hope of obtaining assistance from the missionaries in their difficulties and protection against the coercion of the landlords. it must not be imagined that the

Christian Missionaries held out such offers as inducement to the aboriginals to enrol themselves in the Christian ranks but the knowledge that the Missionaries do not regard their duties as confined to cure souls but also see to the welfare of their flock and the agrarian legislation which is the Magna Charta of the aboriginal was largely due to the influence of the Missionaries" (Legend of the Kols by S Haldar pages 8-9)

In the Settlement Report of 1901-10 Mr John Reid remarked that the aboriginal converts were backed by the moral support and some times by the financial support of the European Missionaries (page 16 *ibid*)

31. As said by Lord Northbrook in his preface to Chhota Nagpur by Bradley Birt, the aboriginal tribes of India afforded a promising field for the Missions, and accordingly, the Belgian Jesuit Mission entered the field in 1885 and has since then been collecting a large following. The Catholic Jesuit Missionaries also tried to exploit the agrarian grievances of the aboriginals and as is evident from the Commissioner's report to Government in 1899 wherein he stated that Mr. Renny, the Deputy Commissioner of Ranchi "condemns the action of the Jesuit priests in very strong language, charging them with encouraging the discontent and laying at their doors the responsibility for disturbances which might have led to serious consequences" (page 18. *Legend of the Kols*). It is well-known that in 1895 there was an uprising of aboriginals led by a German Mission convert by name Birsā who styled himself as the brother of Jesus, and it had to be suppressed with military aid.

32. There was a similar rebellion in 1910 in the Bastar State which was attributed to the activity of a Missionary by name Mr Ward. In the report, dated the 12th July 1910, the officer in charge of the expeditionary force in Bastar State stated that Mr Ward was the most dangerous man in the State. Mr. Ward was transferred to some place outside Bastar, but even from there he wrote secret letters to the Christians in Bastar instigating them to agitate for his retransfer to Bastar and in a search of the houses of certain Christians "treasonable and seditious correspondence was found". Mr. J. May, Diwan of the State, wrote to the Mission authorities at Raipur to say that on enquiry he was satisfied that he and the Christians were instrumental in causing great deal of disloyalty and discontent. Mr. Ward subsequently was sent back to America.

33. In 1936-37, there was an unauthorised attempt made by the Jesuit Missionaries to enter into the Udaipur State for Missionary enterprise. It was found on enquiry by the Agent to the Governor-General that they used their station at Tapkara outside Udaipur State which was a forbidden area for proselytizing the subjects of Udaipur, by making loans to people to attract converts

and opening Mission schools in Udaipur State without permission and the abstraction of 120 boys and girls from Udaipur for education in the Mission centre at Tapkara, and the Government of India warned the Jesuit Mission that any further development of Missionary enterprise in the Udaipur State should be avoided. The Mission was also asked to maintain a register showing in the case of each new convert, his name, his father's name and other particulars including any kind of material benefit given to the converts at the time of their conversion (Col Meek's Report)

34 In 1948, Rev Lakra, the head of the Lutheran Mission at Ranchi, attended the Conference of the World Council of Churches held at Amsterdam. Mr Dulles from America was also present there. As a result of the money received from the United Lutheran Church in America amounting to 8,000 dollars and Rs 90,000 in 1953 there were conversions in the Surguja district on a mass scale (*Gharbandhu*, November 1952, page 13, and *Gharbandhu*, November 1953, pages 15 and 16). The Mission also obtained from America Rs 67,500 to make good the deficit in its expenditure (*Gharbandhu*, December 1953, pages 4 to 7). It is clear that in the keen competition that arose between the various Missions it was found necessary to advance Rs 30 to some of the converts as an inducement to change their religion (*Gharbandhu*, December 1952, pages 2 to 5). In 1954, the Lutheran National Missionary Society requested for a grant of a large amount for engaging the services of the Uraon personnel needed for mass conversion work and through the good offices of Dr F A Schiotz, Chairman of the Lutheran World Federation Commission of World Missions, and Dr C W Oberdorfer, the Federation President of India, they secured a grant of 1,500 dollars on the basis of 'Partnership in Obedience' (*The National Missionary Intelligence*, April 1954, page 5). There was practically an invasion in the Surguja State of Missionary enterprise backed by substantial finance and personnel with the result that there were more than 5,000 conversions.

35 At this stage it may be necessary to see how the Missionaries penetrated into the Eastern States of Madhya Pradesh. In 1893, Sir Andrew Fraser who was then Commissioner of Chhattisgarh gave authority without reference to the local Government for acquisition of land for Mission purposes in the Bastar State when it was under the Government management. The developments which occurred thereon have already been stated above.

36 In 1894 an application made by the Missionaries for the acquisitions of land in the Kawardha State was rejected by the Local Government on the principal that when a State is under the administration of the Government the alienation of land for Mission purposes should be refused in view of the fiduciary position of the Government. Towards the beginning of the 10th century the German Lutheran Mission opened two stations in the Gangpur State without the permission of the Ruler and without reference to



the Local Government In spite of the Chief's protest the political authority did not take any action and one of the Missionaries openly preached disobedience to the Chief's orders in the matter of begar, although rendering of such services was due from the rent-free holders only The Missionaries generally made promises to the ryots that they would secure their freedom from various petty demands from the Darbar As this introduced the principle of insubordination one Missionary was removed from the State under the orders of the Commissioner of Chhota Nagpur who acted then as Political Officer Later a European Diwan found that the Christians were getting quite out of hand and he dealt firmly with the position He formed the opinion that the majority of the people who joined the Missions did so in the expectation of some material advantage and not for any spiritual benefit

37. About the same time the Roman Catholic Mission also entered Jashpur How the rulers of the State were treated by the Government is clear from the letter dated 10th June 1923 from the Roman Catholic Arch Bishop of Calcutta to the Political Agent at Raipur, in which occurs the following sentence—

“In Gangpur the Rajah—under pressure of the Government of Bengal, within whose Jurisdiction Gangpur then was—gave me a perpetual lease at the usual rent, of an extensive plot of Taur land at Kesaramal in 1907; and since then the Chief quite willingly this time has granted me leases of two more plots, one at Hamirpur and one at Gaibera In Jashpur so far we have had only verbal grants”

The Arch Bishop desired the Political Agent to give him a set of perpetual leases but he was disappointed The circumstances in which the Rajah of Jashpur came to be deposed are highly significant, to show the influence which the Missionaries exercised on the Government of the day In 1906 the German Lutheran Mission applied for the issue of a licence to permit entry of Indian preachers into this State The Rajah was reluctant to grant the permission for the entry of the preachers but was prevailed upon by the Political Agent, Mr Laurie to withdraw his opposition Mr Brett the new Political Agent found that about 30,000 people and 15,000 were claimed, respectively, by the Roman Catholics and the Lutheran Mission as enquirers and they were all of the Uraon tribe He reported to Government that the Chief had accepted the agreement mentioned above under pressure from the Political Agent, but the Central Provinces Government held that the Chief could not be given general permission to forbid all Missionaries and preachers from entering the State. But at the same time it warned the Missionary Societies that they could not expect any support from Government against the Chief if their preachers encourage the subjects to resist his lawful demands But on account of continuous conflict between the Chief and the Missionaries the Political Agent, Mr Blakesley made a thorough enquiry and submitted a full report to the Local Government in 1913 He pointed

out that the movement towards Christianity in the Jashpur State was in no sense a religious one, and that the Missionaries had acquired a considerable hold on the people by means of loans. He also showed that under the guise of religious proselytism political propaganda had been spread throughout the State. His recommendation was that the Chief should be permitted to exclude the Jesuit Missionaries and their catechists but the Government declined to accept his recommendations. Mr. Blakesley's statement as to the nature of the religious proselytism was later amply borne out by an admission made by the Arch Bishop of Calcutta to Mr. Napier, the Commissioner of Chhattisgarh in 1912. The Arch Bishop said to Mr. Napier, that putting aside all cant he did not suppose that the majority of the aboriginal Christians in the State had much feeling either way in the matter of religion and that they embraced Christianity in the hope that material benefit would result to themselves. The trouble arose in 1922 in Jashpur when a Society by name 'the Unity Samaj' came to be formed by the Lutherans of Ranchi, and there was a report of a dangerous movement amongst Missions' preachers in the State. The Roman Catholic Arch Bishop of Calcutta, wrote to the Political Agent sending an account by one of his priests that Lutheran preachers had been fomenting trouble that would lead to a rebellion which in fact did ensue and resulted in the deposition of the Rajah of Jashpur.

It was to avoid such trouble that the Conversion Act 1936 came to be enacted by the Raigarh Darbar.

38 Let us now turn to the steps taken by Government to afford protection to the aborigines. The Government of India Act of 1870 conferred upon the Governor-General in Council the power to approve and sanction laws and regulations made by local Government for the administration of certain special areas to which previously the Secretary of State in Council had applied the Act. In 1874 the Indian Legislature passed the scheduled Districts Act XIV of 1874 whereby the Local Government was empowered to declare in respect of the tracts specified in the Act what enactments were or were not in force therein. It was in pursuance of this that the Central Provinces Government passed the Land Alienation Act in 1916. The Government of India Act of 1919 under section 52-A (2) empowered the Governor-General in Council to declare the territories occupied by the aborigines to be a backward tract. The Statutory Commission of 1928 grouped the backward tracts into two large categories, one as wholly excluded areas and the other as partially excluded areas. It was found that the aboriginal people such as the Gonds had taken part in political movements, viz., non-co-operation movement of 1920-21, the Nagpur Flag Satyagrah of 1923 and the Forest Satyagraha of 1930. (Page 49 the Aboriginal Problem in the Balaghat District). In the annual report intended for submission to the British Parliament the aspect of forest Satyagraha, was particularly stressed to show that the violation of the Forest Laws enabled the agitators to achieve a substantial measure

of success in fostering unrest among the tribes. (India in 1930-31 page 554) When the proposals of the Statutory Commission came up before the Parliament Col. Wedgwood said that he had received "An infinity of letters from India", urging that the tribes should be allowed to be looked after by the Indians but in his opinion the educated Indians wanted "to get them in as cheap labour". Adverting to the African parallel he expressed his conviction that the best hope for backward tribes everywhere lay in the Christian Missionaries (Ghurye—The Aborigines page 134) It is well known that a list was finally prepared and embodied in the Government of India (excluded and partially excluded areas) Order 1936 in accordance with sections 91 and 92 of the Government of India Act of 1935. The distinction between the two was that the Governor was required to exercise his functions in regard to the excluded areas in his own discretion and in regard to the partially excluded areas he was to seek the advice of the Ministers.

39 As a result of the Statutory exclusion of these tribes they had been treated as if they were the close preserve for Missionary enterprise. Reviewing the problem as a whole the real inroad on tribal solidarity was made by the introduction of the British rule which destroyed the authority of the tribal elders, and their traditional panchayat systems. Even Dr. Hutton who contributed Chapter XII to O'Malley's Modern India and the West stated that the establishment of the British Rule in India, far from being of immediate benefit to the primitive tribes did most of them much more harm than good (Page 173 Ghurye the Aborigines) The Forest Conservancy Laws, the excise Policy and laws, tyranny of petty officers, forced labour and rapacious money-lender have all contributed to the disruption of the tribal solidarity, and that has given an opportunity for the enterprise of the Missionaries

40 Dr Elwin wrote in 1944 bringing into prominence the evil effects of excluding the tribal areas from the general administration of the country and pointing out that in practice all it appeared to have achieved had been to give encouragement to proselytising Missions for exploitation of these people so remote from the scrutiny of public opinion. Speaking about the Mandla district he says

"In Mandla the situation has grown serious for here the Fathers of the Apostolic prefecture Jabalpur are proselytising on an unprecedented scale and on the method that would have been considered disgraceful in the middle ages"

Further he says

"The Missionaries usurp many of the functions of Government officials, try to interfere in the work of the courts and business of the local officials and give the Gonds the impression that they are the real Sirkar and the Fathers finally have an extensive money-lending business and this is one of the most effective means of bringing aboriginals under their control and forcing them into the Church"

41 Reviewing the whole question in the light of its history one is driven to the conclusion that they established a State within the State

## JHARKHAND

42 The separatist tendency that has gripped the mind of the aborigines under the influence of the Lutheran and Roman Catholic Missions is entirely due to the consistent policy pursued by the British Government and the Missionaries. The final segregation of the aborigines in the Census of 1931 from the main body of the Hindus considered along with the recommendations of the Simon Commission which were incorporated in the Government of India Act, 1935, apparently set the stage for the demand of a separate State of Jharkhand on the lines of Pakistan. The stages by which it culminated in the demand for Jharkhand will be clear from what follows.

43 In 1941, Shri M D Tigga wrote and published a book entitled Chhota Nagpur Ker Putri (the daughter of Chhota Nagpur). It was printed in the Gossner Evangelical Lutheran Press, Ranchi. At page 19 of that book it is found

“आदिवासी मनके राज्यनैतिक और आर्थिक पतनके देखके १८९८ के साल मे एक सभा खडा भेलक उकर शुरु नाम छोटा नागपुर ख्रिश्चन असोसियेशन रहे बढ़ते बढ़ते १९१५ साल मे ऊ सभा कुछ मजबुत भई गेलख, और ऊकर नाम छोटा नागपुर उन्नती समाज रखल गेला अतमा अभी ओहे सभा १९३८ साल में आदिवासी महासभा के केरा नाम से चालू रहे ”

(English translation)

“Looking to the political and economic backwardness of the Adivasis, a Sabha was formed in the year 1898. Its original name was Chhota Nagpur Christian Association. As it grew, it became somewhat strong in 1915 and its name became Chhota Nagpur Unnati Samaj. The same Sabha since 1938 is called Adivasi Mahasabha.”

44 In the Survey and Settlement Report, Ranchi, 1927—35, there is a reference to political movement started by one Tana Bhagat and this Unnati Samaj about the year 1915. The Tana Bhagat movement was in its origin purely religious and confined mainly to the Uiaons aimed at substituting Hinduized religious doctrines for the old animistic beliefs of the people. The Unnati Samaj was a movement organised by Lutheran Christians amongst the Mundas directed towards the moral and social improvement of people. These two movements were originally separate and non-political but about the year 1921-22 under the influence of the non-co-operation movement they merged into one and developed an attitude which was antagonistic to landlord and distrustful of Government. As the movement gathered force, the Police in 1922 had to take strong action against Tana Bhagat when Tana Bhagat's Panchayat attempted to fine a raiyat. Thereafter there was the

first session of the Adiwasi Sabha Conference on 22nd January 1939 at Ranchi, which was presided over by Shri Jaipalsingh, M. P. (page 33 Adiwasi Mahasabha Visheshank March, 1939) In the presidential address he said as follows. —

"The Adiwasis are all now one in their struggle for freedom from the tyranny of mere numbers. We offer a united front, an amazing fact in the annals of the aborigines. All the Missionary institutions working here are with us, another remarkable achievement. Even the Bengalis are crying for separation, the Europeans and Anglo-Indians are openly showing us their sympathy" (p. 34, *ibid*)

He proceeded further to say, "On no account must our educational facilities be reduced, but on the contrary the *grants to the Missionary Societies should be augmented*. The Missionaries are devoting their lives to our uplift and education we must ask the Governor to utilize section 80 so that he may include in the schedule such additional amount, if any, not exceeding the amount of the rejected demand" (p. 36, *ibid*)

The resolution which was adopted by the Conference was as follows —

"It is essential that these aboriginal districts forming as they do compact area most intimately bound together as between themselves by racial, linguistic, cultural, historical and agrarian bonds should be constituted into a separate administrative unit, for the sake of furthering the racial, economic, educational, cultural and political interest of the backward people of this area (whose distinctive unity and whose right to separation from Bihar has in a way been admitted and recognised by the Simon Commission and the framers of the Government of India Act, 1935), by constituting these tracts into so-called excluded area and that His Excellency the Governor of Bihar, the Viceroy and Governor-General of India and the Rt Hon the Secretary of State for India be implored to convey to His Majesty's Government (with recommendations) the earnest desire of the Adiwasi Sabha to constitute Chhota Nagpur and Santhal Parganas into a separate Governor's province at the earliest possible date and in any case before the federation of India is instituted" (p. 42, *ibid*)

45 The Adiwasi Mahasabha was superseded by the Jharkhand Party as announced by Jaipalsingh at the annual session of the Sabha of 1950 at Jamshedpur with the membership being open to non-adiwasi as well (Abua Jharkhand Jaipalsingh Visheshank, 16 January 1955, p. 15)

46 There was a controversy in the newspapers between Shri Jaipalsingh and Professor Hayward his Secretary as regards the person who had received the amount of Rs. 50,000 from the Muslim League (Jharkhand News, dated Ranchi, the 6th March 1949)

47 This attempt of the Adiwasis initiated by the Christian section thereof is a feature which is common to the developments in Burma, Assam and Indo-China among the Karens, Nagas and

Amboynes This is attributed to the spirit of religious nationalism awakened among the converted Christians as among the followers of other religions But the idea of change of religion as bringing about change of nationality appears to have originated in the Missionary circles, as one gathers from the following passage regarding the Karens of Burma —

“Before the coming of the Missionaries the Karens were a subordinate Hill Tribe, animist by faith The Missionaries gave them education and through the translation of the Bible a written language This remarkable achievement, the giving of a nationality to a people, has resulted in one embarrassment Missionaries are held responsible for slowing up the Burma-nization of the Karens Karens have to-day a strong national society which sent a delegation to London to plead for a Karen nation” (Page 138 Rethinking Missions, 1932)

48 Thus while the Census officer isolates certain sections of the people from the main bodies, the Missionaries by converting them give them a separate nationality so that they may demand a separate State for themselves

49 The attitude of the Catholics was professedly against the agitation for Jharkhand or any separatist movement Rameshwar Prasad Sharma (Jashpur 21) stated that they were secretly helping the movement His statement derives strong support from the issue of Nishkalank (the official organ of the Catholics) of October 1947 On the front page of it, there is the picture of Madonna with the child and facing her is the map of Chhota-Nagpur At page 148, there is given the explanation of the picture in these words —

“राची धर्मप्राप्त कब छोटा नागपुर की रानी, माता मरीया के हाथ में अर्पण किया जायगा?

‘हे छोटा नागपुर की रानी,

तेरी प्रार्थना के द्वारा तेरे पुत्र, खीस्त राजा ने समारोह से हमारे देश में प्रवेश किया है और उसे निवास-स्थान बनाया है ’

‘महा पुनरागमन की कुवारी,

इसी घड़ी, जब इतने झूठे नबी छोटा नागपुर को हर लेने की चेष्टा कर रहे हैं, अपने राज्य में समारोह से प्रवेश कर और अपने पास और अपने पुत्र के पास सबसारो, लुथरनो, अगलिकनो और सब दूसरो को बुला ’ ”

(English translation)

When will the Ranchi Holy Land be dedicated to the Mother Maria ?

“Oh, the Queen of Chhota Nagpur, by your grace Christ-king entered this land with splendour and established his residence here Oh, thou Virgin of the Resurrection, at this moment, when false prophets are trying to appropriate Chhota Nagpur, enter thy kingdom with triumph and invite the Hindus (unconverted) Lutherans, Anglicans and others to be with you and your son ”

### CHAPTER III—CHRISTIAN POST-WAR WORLD POLICY

The intensified activity of the Christian Missions in India is an integral part of the post-war Christian world policy and as such it must be viewed in the light of the world situation in order to grasp its full significance in India

2 It is significant that the first and second world wars were mainly fought between Christian countries. They were not wars amongst followers of different religions. It was felt that the establishment and maintenance of peace was no more a political issue than a religious one. During the first World War as a whole the Churches actively upheld the claims of their respective nations. They were used as foci of propaganda for the aims and purposes of each nation. Towards the end of the second World War it came to be thought that there was a direct threat to the survival of Christianity itself (Social Problems, Appleton Century Co. New-York, page 351).

3 As stated in the World Christian Hand Book 1952, pages 34 and 35, European civilization until recently was considered to be Christian but a great change came over European life and great apprehensions regarding the Christian substance of society were felt. European churches were, therefore, concerned about the recovery of the Gospel, the renewal of Christian faith, the revival of the Church and the re-Evangelization and re-Christianisation of European life. Many a European Churchman spoke of Europe as Mission field. The common life of the average Englishman seemed to be little influenced by the Christian faith (P 38)

4 In 1941 during the World War II the "Commission of the Churches on International Friendship and Social Responsibility" was set up in Britain. In 1942 the Commission issued a document on *Christian Church and world order viewed from Christian point of view such as common moral purpose, international political framework economic justice, disarmament and the rights of the minority and colonial people*. Similarly in U S A the Federal Council of Churches (which had been created in 1908) appointed in 1941, a special Commission on a Just and Durable Peace under the chairmanship of Mr John Foster Dulles. In July 1943 that Commission convened a Round Table Conference which issued a Christian message on "*World—Order*" in which the political propositions previously formulated by the United States Commission as the 6 pillars of peace were unanimously welcomed and in the section addressed to the Church the Round Table stressed the opportunity for evangelism on a worldwide basis

5 In the closing period of the war Church discussions of world order were increasingly directed to consideration of proposals for a new international organisation to meet the urgent needs of the post-war world. The formulation of the Dumbarton Oak's proposals in 1944 gave great impetus to such discussions

6 The U S Commission on a Just and Durable Peace convened in Cleveland, Ohio, in January 1945 set up a National Study Conference which made nine recommendations for improvement of Dumbarton Oak's proposals. These recommendations received wide support among the American Churches and were given careful consideration in Government circles. Similarly, British Council of Churches formulated in 1945 its recommendations for submission to the British Government. These representations were among the creative influences brought to bear on the San Francisco Conference of the United Nations held in April-June, 1945. The religious spokesman at the above conference has been credited with the decision to include within the Charter provision for a Commission on Human Rights.

7 At another meeting of the Commission on a Just and Durable Peace held in November 1945, it laid stress on *the development of Christian unity* amongst various Churches on a world wide basis with a view to bring more effective influence to bear on international affairs. The Commission announced

"Now, what was ended, world-wide organisation of the Christian Church can be developed so as to co-ordinate, as to substance and timing, the Christian effort (for world-order) in many lands. *The Christian forces* of the world, though still a minority, must on that very account quickly become *a well organised and militant minority*." (World Christian Handbook, 1952, p 57)

8 In August, 1946 an International Conference of Church leaders was convened by the Commission on a Just and Durable Peace at the instance of the Interim Committee of the International Missionary Council. The Conference issued a draft charter for a permanent joint agency of the International Missionary Council and World Council of Churches to be called "*The Commission of the Churches on International Affairs*". The Director of that Commission, Dr O Frederick Nolde, kept in close touch with the Commission on Human Rights (of the U N O) and the outcome was the *declaration on religious liberty* adopted by the World Council of Churches and the International Missionary Council.

9 The first full meeting of the committee of I M C was held at Whitby in 1947. It set out its primary duty to be "the active encouragement of an expectant evangelism", and dwelt in particular on the crucial necessity of *full freedom of religion, which includes both liberty of worship and the right to educate and persuade*. It discussed two papers, viz, "Christian Witness in a Revolutionary World" and "*Partners in Obedience*" (P 94 W C H B 1952). In the following year the I M C met again at Oegstgeest in Netherland. It reported on the close Liaison maintained with the *World Dominion Press* and considered an important paper on the subject of "*Communist policy and the Missionary Movement*". It resolved to extend and continue the "Orphaned Mission Fund" for



another five years (In the decade 1939—1949 a total of 83,00,000 dollars had been contributed to the Lutheran World Federation) It also decided to fix for the I M C fund (1951—2 00,000 dollars, 1952—1,55,000 dollars, 1953—1,75,000 dollars The Missionary Society of Germany, Finland and others were the beneficiaries of this fund) (P. 95 *ibid*)

10 Although Europe itself required “re-Evangelisation and re-Christianisation” because of the spread of the Gospel of Communism according to Marx, the W C C and I M C *turned their attention to India* and other colonial countries They were encouraged by the promulgation of our Constitution which set up a secular State with liberty to propagate any religion in the country. They noted that the Churches in India were growing steadily in number partly by natural increase, partly from evangelisation and that the mass or community movements to Christianity did not die out though slowed down, but that the spiritual life of the congregation was low and that the Indian Church lacked economic maturity Though India has the most highly organised *National Christian Council* it had to be largely *paid for from abroad*. Even the institutional activities of Missions, viz, schools, colleges and hospitals were dependant upon *foreign support* Even the ordinary congregational life and pastoral duty still required some form of foreign aid (P 13)

11 Now for all the ills of the world of today infested by the demon of Communism Christianity professes to offer the mantra of not ‘Christ the hope of the Church’ but ‘Christ the hope of the world’, particularly the hope of Asia This is in line with the thought of Sir Andrew Fraser, viz, in the elevating and civilizing power of Christianity the ‘hope of India’ lies she ought to receive of our best (P 275, *Among Rajahs and Ryots*, Revised Edition, 1912) Accordingly evangelism in India came to be accelerated when the Constitutional provision of religious freedom opened the gates to the missionaries It was, therefore, decided to send evangelistic teams to such areas with all the resources for mass evangelism through the press, films, radio, etc, “*to realise the Church as the instrument in God’s hand, to face the problem of Communism and Secularism, to raise a prophetic voice against social, economic and racial injustice*” (P 27, *The Missionary Obligation of the Church* Wilingen, 1952)

12 The new evangelistic movement sprang up for the purpose of subjugating the new secular utopias, viz, Stalinism and Scientific Humanism and also to counter “*the Utopian expectations of the non-Christian religions*”. (Pp 27-28, *Elements of Ecumenism*)

13 It is interesting to notice that out of the four main subdivisions of the Christians, viz, the Western Protestants or Occidental Churches, the Roman Catholic, the Eastern Orthodox of the Byzantine Tradition and the Oriental National Churches usually described as the Monophysites, only one takes an active and responsible part in the ecumenical work and that is the Western Protestant

Churches and consequently only that section impresses its own outlook on all its activities (p 38-39, Elements of Ecumenism). This section of the Churches is led by America

14 The strength of the American personnel of the foreign Missions has increased by 500 since 1951. The invasion of the Missionary teams was in the Suiguja district which had been closed to the Missions before the integration in 1947 with Madhya Pradesh. In August, 1948 its Assembly of the World Council of Churches met at Amsterdam at which Mr John Foster Dulles read a paper on Christian responsibility in our divided world, Rev. J Lakra of the Gossnei Evangelical Mission of Ranchi also attended that meeting. In the report of that meeting the decision was summed up in one sentence, viz, "*God has given to His people in Jesus Christ a unity which is His creation and not our achievement*"

15 In 1949 the Eastern Asia Christian Conference came to be held under the joint auspices of the I M C and the W C C at Bangkok in 1949. Its report on "The Church in Social and Political Life" declared "the Gospel proclaims that God's sovereignty includes all realms of life. *Christ sitting at the right hand of God reigns*, and the Church owes it to the world to remind it constantly that it lives under His judgment and grace. It is not the challenge of any ideology but the knowledge of the love of God in Christ for man, that is, the basis of the Church's social and political concern. In East Asia, the majority of people, both in the rural and urban areas, live in conditions of abject poverty and under oppressive systems that cramp their personality, and it is the will of God that the Church should witness to His redeeming love through an active concern for human freedom and justice" (p 114, The Christian Prospect in Eastern Asia, New York 1950—quoted at page 90 of Christianity and the Asian Revolution). The social task of the Church was stated to be to claim *the whole world for Him who is King and lord of all* (P 90, ibid)

16 In the report of the Ecumenical Study Conference for East Asia held under the auspices of the Study Department W C C at Lucknow, India, in 1952, it was declared that Christians must be prepared to recognise that the changes in the structure of society can be effected mainly through political action and that, therefore, they must be prepared to accept the necessity of political action as a means of promoting social justice (p 31, Christ the Hope of Asia, Madras, 1953, quoted at page 91, ibid)

17 As the work of the United Nations was regarded as of major concern to the Church Commission on International Affairs (in view of the "fragile fabric of peace" being under the threat of being torn as under by the cold war produced by Soviet tension) the various Christian Churches of the world came to emphasise that the Church of Christ was 'World-wide', 'supra-national' and 'supra-racial', and that it involved a deeper understanding of the Missionary obligation of the Church, viz, evangelism and a closer link between the

*Mission of the Church at home and overseas* (P. 28, World Christian Hand Book 1952). Realising this call from God the Church membership in North America began to rise steadily and with the increased givings for Church support *American Churches assumed the leadership in Overseas Missions*. As it was found that in the old Mission fields there were now *Churches touched by the new nationalisms* independent in temper and organisation and yet needing help from other Churches, it was emphasised that there should be a new understanding of the nature of the Church, its unity and call of God to special vocations and the need of particular Churches *to be rooted in the soil and yet supranational in their witness and obedience* (P. 29, *ibid*). In the vigorous campaign of proselytization which began in India the evangelistic activity had to consider the prospects among the Hindu upper and middle classes and the lower class including the forest tribe. As regards the upper and middle class it is admitted that Christianity has made no serious impact on Hindu learning or the upper and middle classes. But in view of the capacity of Hindu culture for absorbing other elements it is thought necessary to transmit the Christian faith *at its points of need as early as possible in view of the possibility of Communist infiltration from within and pressure from without*" (P. 14 *ibid* 1952)

18 The activity accordingly turned to the *underprivileged classes whose way to life abundant is blocked by poverty*. These people would be incapable of receiving the Christian message in their ignorance and degradation until they are freed from the *bondage and degradation in which they are kept by their heathen overlords* (P. 126, *Missions in Rural India* Tambaram Report, p. 19, *Spontaneous Expansion of the Church*, p. 112). The Evangelist, therefore came forward with financial help for raising their standard of life and gathering them into the Church.

19 As regards non-Christian religions, viz. Hinduism, Buddhism and Confucianism, they are gaining new lease of life and are challenging Christianity by denying its uniqueness by putting forward the dogma that all religions lead to the same goal. (Pages 213 and 215, 135, 136, *Christianity and Asian Revolution*)

20 Accordingly, it is the duty of the Universal Church to execute the King's Commission for exterminating these religions. In the words of A. G. Hogg, the Christian Church without being false to its origin cannot help being aggressive. It cannot be otherwise because "it is a people conscious of a transcendental Mission

It is the little flock to which it is the heavenly Father's royal pleasure to give that Kingdom. It holds its King's Commission to make disciples of all the nations." It is further claimed that evangelism that is the proclamation of good news with a view to conversion is not a peculiar activity of a new Christians but the whole world of the fact that God in Christ has entered history to save. The missionary obligation of the Church is in short

this "we must simply take Christ at His word. He told us to go and preach and baptise Every disciple a Missionary and no way out." (Christian Home No 30, of 1954, page 9)

21 Alexander McLeish speaking at the Fellowship of International Missionary Society Conference held in June, 1948 said, "recently our Indian Christian leaders have seen the vision of *evangelising India* and have issued a call to evangelise systematically in *the next 10 years the 600,000 villages of India* The material resources are there, but better still the spiritual resources are more than adequate to the completion of the evangelistic task Thus, Whitby strikes the two notes needed as we face the Problem of India today, viz, *the planned evangelism of India's teeming villages* and the fullest co-operation of Church and Mission which would be involved in the carrying of the the task to a successful issue' <sup>2</sup> This is in accordance with what was recommended in the report of the Missions in rural India in 1930, p 126 and the idea of the conquest of the world by Christianity (P 35 Rethinking Missions) Pamphlets like "*The World Conquest soon by God's Kingdom*" are issued by the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society, New York U S A. and the Television Broadcasts in America call upon the American Democracy to send '*Invasion Teams*' of *Missionaries into all the nations of the world and begin to turn the needy millions into the Kingdom of God*—as the greatest Mission crusade in Church history It came to be emphasised that the Church of Christ was 'World Wide', "Supra-national" and "Supra-racial" It was essentially one This preaching had *political implications* of its own The Christians in a State owed double allegiance, on the one hand they owed their loyalty to Christ and on the other, to the State Ordinarily, there might be no clash, but in case there was a conflict of loyalties between Christ and State the true Christian had necessarily to choose obedience to Christ Allegiance to the State is a political and a national duty Allegiance to the Church is a religious and spiritual duty The two have distinct fields no doubt And normally no conflict is to be observed between the two And if political divisions of the world were never to be influenced by religions there can never be any conflict between the two allegiance But that is a big if There are even in the present-day world many States based on religion And our own country has been split on the basis of religion Such being the case, conflict between loyalty to the State and loyalty to the Church cannot be ruled out In India, there is an intensive evangelistic drive through press, film, radio, in the rural areas.

22 This evangelistic activity is professedly directed against Communism The world powers are at present divided into two groups, the Anglo-American Block and the Soviet Block The former have the backing of the Christian Missionaries India is pursuing a policy of its own by non-alignment with any of the above two blocks Both the Communists and the Christian M

sionaries have their eyes on India. The very existence of non-Christian religions in India, Burma and Islamic countries is regarded as a challenge to the uniqueness of Christianity (P. 213, Christianity and Asian Revolution)

23 The idea as stated by Fraser in his book "Among Indian Rajahs and Ryots" is that to meet the intellectual awakening and the revival of national spirit India should receive Christianity as its only hope. Toynbee in his Reith lectures 1952 stated that the West had invaded the world, particularly Asia which adopted Technology and Nationalism but not Christianity, and he suggested that nationalism would be dangerous unless it was balanced by Christianity. †In the Missionary circles it was found that there was even among Indian Christians a strong tide of national feeling opposed to foreign domination which is explained as being only a part of the universal national feeling which has been so marked a feature of recent years. (Page 31, Spontaneous Expansion of the Church)

24 To overcome this tide of nationalism the conversion of the people to Christianity apparently offered itself as an effective instrument. As stated by Count Keyserling, Christianity was originally a religion of the proletariat. It was in opposition to the favoured classes from the beginning. Wherever, it turns it carries the seeds of disruption (P. 56, Travel Diary of Philosopher). Hence the appeal by the Missionary bodies to the hungry and under-privileged areas of world (P. 126, Mission in Rural India, Tambaram Report, P. 19, Missionary Obligation of the Church, P. 35 and Spontaneous Expansion of the Church, P. 112). That it is in this form that the masses are approached by the preachers is clear from the statement of Arch Bishop of Ambikapur, Rev Nath of Khandwa and letter of Rev Youngblutt.

25 As described by Toynbee in the Reith lectures 1952 a creed also is a tool though of a psychological nature. In the conflict between Communism and Democracy combined with the Church, America is taking the lead as indicated by Wendell Wilkie in his 'One World'. In view of the radical shift since 1945 in the International balance of power which has affected every country in Asia, American Democracy (United States) finds itself devoid of any Asian territory. She has partly compensated for this by establishing military bases on the Pacific fringe of Asia from Japan to the Philippines and by forming military alliances with several countries. (P. 22, Christianity and Asian Revolution). In Asia the issues of nationalism and colonialism have become inextricably involved in conflict between the West and the Communist powers. (P. 23, *ibid*). The drive for proselytization in India is an attempt to acquire an additional base which of course would be psychological. People converted to Christianity would be mostly from the outcastes or the aboriginals who can be primed with hatred against their countrymen, if for no other reason than the fact that the latter are 'idolators' and that the former belong to the Kingdom of God.

26 In the Census Report of 1891, Volume XI, Part I, page 79, there is a reference to the opinion of Mr Baines recorded in the Bombay Census Report of 1881 to the effect that the success of Christian Missions would be more marked among the lower classes than among the rest for two reasons, one, the greater receptivity of a member of the lower classes and, two, emotional appeals which neither his intelligence nor his education disposes him to enlarge. As observed by Crozier, the fact is that the Christian Missionaries indoctrinate into the minds of the people they convert the idea that "the essence of religion lies in the attitude of the heart and emotions and that it is not a matter of intellectual belief at all but a matter of faith, a thing not to be argued about or proven but to be accepted in trust and lowly obedience. Thus, religion brings about a change of heart or conversion" (page 227, *Civilization and Progress*) that places the converts entirely under the domination of the Missionaries and wipes out his individuality. The failure of the Missionary appeal to the intelligentsia is entirely due to the absence of any intellectual and rational argument put forward in support of the dogma propounded by them as was observed as far back as 1807 by Lord Minto (*Vide Supra*, p 39)

27 We can, thus, safely conclude that the aim of accelerating the process of proselytization is the following —

- (1) to resist the progress of national unity in the colonial countries after their independence. That can be gathered, as pointed out in the *New Statesman and Nation*, dated November 26th, 1955, from the "rival" Russian policy of strengthening the nationalism of these countries.
- (2) To emphasise the difference in the attitude towards the principle of co-existence between India and America. India desires peaceful co-existence whereas the policy of the World Council of Churches as expressed in the report of its "Commission on Christian social action" is to regard co-existence as amounting to mere appeasement which it does not favour in view of the divisions existing particularly between the totalitarian powers and 'Free Nations' with diverse economic and political systems. The World Council of Churches recommend that the correct policy should be that of "Peaceful competition" with a sincere commitment to growing co-operation" (1955 Blue Book Annual Report of the Evangelical and Reformed Church, page 114). Light is thrown on this idea of "Peaceful competition" in an article which describes the present contest as "competitive co-existence" (*New York Times*, November 1, 1954 quoted at p 4, in Pamphlet "World Conquest Soon" by God's Kingdom). On the other hand Mr Kagano-vitch, made it clear in his speech on the anniversary

of the Russian revolution that co-existence meant that the struggle between Communism and Democracy was to be waged by competition. (the New Statesman and Nation, November 26, 1955).

- (3) To take advantage of the freedom accorded by the Constitution of India to the propagation of religion, and to create a Christian party in the Indian democracy on the lines of the Muslim League ultimately to make out a claim for a separate State, or at least to create "militant minority"

In short the situation seems to be that the Papacy representing the Catholic Church and the American Democracy are united in their frantic drive for gathering proselytes to Christianity to combat Communism the former to extend its religious empire and the latter to obtain world leadership.

## PART III

### CHAPTER I.—RELIGIOUS LIBERTY IN OTHER COUNTRIES

The Joint Committee appointed by the Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America and the Foreign Missions Conference of North America in the year 1944, in their "Statement on Religious Liberty", have defined the term as given below —

"Religious Liberty shall be interpreted to include freedom to worship according to conscience and to bring up children in the faith of their parents, freedom for the individual to change his religion, freedom to preach, educate, publish and carry on missionary activities, and freedom to organise with others, and to acquire and hold property, for these purposes". (Religious Liberty Bates, page 309)

2 Religious Liberty, as defined above, has been in existence in India from times immemorial. India is a land of many religions—Hinduism, majority religion, is itself a co-ordinated combination of various beliefs. It has survived through ages by its liberal and receptive attitude towards other faiths. There have undoubtedly been controversies in India of a religious and philosophical nature but there has been perfect freedom of Conscience. Coercion and religious persecution have been unknown in Hindu society. The alleged persecution of the Buddhists has been held to be a myth on critical research [Buddhist India by Rhys Davids, p 211 (Sushil Gupta, Calcutta)]

The all-embracing polytheism of the early Hindus afforded ample scope for different beliefs to exist side by side without trying to oust one another. Both Jainism and Buddhism were deviations from some aspects of early Aryan faith. "Their rise and progress, the standardisation of Jainism as a minor sect of ascetic tendencies, the extension, the export, the decline of Buddhism within a Society of Hinduism, all were essentially peaceful. The changes came by persuasion and by slow social pressures or movements, without clear conflict of group wills against other groups or against individuals". (Religious Liberty Bates, page 267)

Hindu India provided in the person of King Ashok the Great, who subsequently became a convert to Buddhism, a unique instance of goodwill and toleration towards other religions. One of his well-known inscriptions reads as follows —

"King Piyadasī (Ashok) dear to the Gods, honours all sects, the ascetics (hermits) or those who dwell at home, he honours them with charity and in other ways. But the King, dear to the Gods, attributes less importance to this charity and these honours than to the vow of seeing the reign of virtues, which constitutes the essential part of them. For all these virtues



there is a common source, modesty of speech That is to say, *One must not exalt one's creed discrediting all others, nor must one degrade these others without legitimate reasons One must, on the contrary, render to other creeds the honour befitting them*" (Religious Liberty, pp 267-268 Bates)

What a lucid and comprehensive exposition of liberty of religion? It is, as it were, "faith in the goodness of faith" Refraining from speaking well of one's own faith and ill of others enables us to appreciate in a friendly discussion the truth and beauty in the teachings of other groups which enriches one's own belief Charity and toleration are thus developed Hindu India has maintained this spirit of religious toleration

3 According to some of the Christian writers, intolerance in religion came in the wake of the advent of Christianity Professor Guido de Ruggiero in his article on "Religious Liberty", published in the "Encyclopedia of Social Sciences", writes —

"The antagonist in the major struggle of mankind for religious freedom has been Christianity, which accentuated the elements of intolerance included in its Hebraic heritage and supplemented them by the introduction of two new and potent incentives—the idea of a universal mission, a rigid dogma, the conception of the Church as an indispensable mediator between God and man" (Religious Liberty Bates, p 132)

In exposition of the above statement, Professor Raffini writes in his book "Religious Liberty"

"When the idea of a single and universal God was set, first by the Hebrews and then by the Christians, against the ancient polytheism, there arose a new form of religious exclusivism contrary to the old not less in its basis than in its effects The Gods of the other peoples were said to be false and fallen, and religion lost its national and public character and became on the one side cosmopolitan and on the other proper to each single individual From this followed not only *an inextinguishable spirit of proselytism but also the principle that he only could be saved who worshipped the true God, that is to say, the principle of absolute intolerance* (italics ours) (Religious Liberty Bates, p 132)

4 During the first three hundred years of its existence Christianity itself was faced with the question of how it could make its way in a non-Christian society ruled by the Roman Empire The question of its being intolerant, therefore, could not arise The early Roman Emperors looked upon Christianity with suspicion as it preached "novel principles and sanctions, not Roman" Until Decius' *Edict* of 250 there was, however, "no general and systematic persecution of Christianity" Then an era of torture and persecution started in full swing First, the Christians were required to sacrifice to the old Gods under penalty of imprisonment Then

their Churches were seized Christian assemblies were banned, their bishops and priests were executed and even laymen of standing lost their posts, their properties and even their rights of residence. Ultimately their Churches were destroyed, their scriptures confiscated, their clergies imprisoned and subjected to great tortures and finally all Christians were required by law to offer sacrifice to old gods or die. There was a change in policy when Constantine rose to the throne of the Roman Empire. He issued an *edict* in 312 or 313 providing for individual freedom of conscience, for full rights to Christianity on an equality with other recognised religions, and for restoration of Church property recently confiscated. Emperor Constantine was anxious to consolidate his vast Roman Empire comprising peoples of different faiths. He considered Christianity as a useful handle in unifying the complex empire. Thus "favour was soon advanced to privilege and privilege to prestige that approached exclusive power"

5 The tables were now turned against other faiths. "By the Codes of Theodosius and Justinian, heretics were forbidden to build Churches, to assemble for religious purposes, or to teach their doctrines even in private. They denied rights of bequest and of inheritance, even of contract. Death was prescribed for lapse from Christianity into pagan rites. By the time of Justinian pagans were required to hear instruction in the Churches and were subjected to exile and confiscation of property if they refused baptism. Young children of pagan families were to be baptized" (Religious Liberty Bates, p 135)

It is thus evident that repressive measures against non-Christians were plentifully decreed. In fifty-seven years from Valentinian I, no less than sixty-eight laws against heretics were enacted.

6 Theodosius II and Valentinian III (5th century) made deviation from orthodoxy "a crime against the State carrying even the death penalty". By 407, heresy was made a public crime. Soon it was enacted that the Imperial service should receive "no one who disagrees with us in faith and religion". Thus Theodosius the Great, relentlessly pressed his subjects to conform to "Catholic (Trinitarian) Christianity". By the year 386, all public discussion of religious issues was prohibited. Imperial authority in spiritual matters was thus fully established in utter disregard of the "proud Christian conviction that the Emperor was not to be considered in terms of divinity".

7 What was the attitude of Christianity towards the Jews after Christianity itself was in authority?

At first Judaism remained as in pagan Rome, "a permitted religion", subject to certain disabilities. It was characterised by Theodosian Code as "abominable superstition". Jews were not eligible to public office. A Christian who adopted Judaism lost his right of bequest. Exile or death was the penalty prescribed.

for the Jew who married a Christian wife. Capital punishment was awarded to a Jew who carried out proselytization of Christians. In the seventh century in Spain, Italy and Frankish Empire, Jews were ordered to choose between baptism and expulsion. It is really a matter of great surprise how the Christians could justify "the severity and ostracism" practised by the entire community against the Jews with doctrine of "tolerance and protection" which the teaching of scripture required of them.

"The employment of organised religion on behalf of the State power and of State power on behalf of organised religion, both in contradiction of liberty, is found in the policy of Charlemagne among the Saxons. In his first capitulary for them he not only provided extraordinary honour and protection for the Church, he decreed death for those participating in pagan sacrifices and for those refusing to accept baptism". (P 136 Religion Liberty Bates)

8 Kenneth S Latourette in his book "A History of the Expansion of Christianity" writes

"The conversion of the Saxons was achieved by a combination of armed force and zeal of the missionaries. The completion of conversion of the entire Roman Empire in the fourth and fifth centuries, accomplished though it had been under the urge of imperial legislation, had probably not entailed the killing of as many non-Christians as did the winning of this comparatively small area in North-Western Germany". (Ibid, p 136)

9 The above procedure was repeated again and again in the next thousand years of the history of Christianity from eighth to nineteenth century. Invaders and conquerors have been employing the Church for the purpose of consolidating their political conquests.

10 Religious liberty was woefully crushed as a result of the unholy alliance between the Church and the State to persecute and torture those who did not subscribe to the official religions.

11 Reaction came at last. There was demand for separation of the Church from the State and vice versa during the period (1500—1700) called the Reformation Era. Luther led the movement of Reformation. He gave expression in his early life to views like these "Belief is a free thing which cannot be enforced. Heresy is a spiritual thing which no iron can hew down, no fire burn, no water drown". Later on there was however, a change in his attitude. His vehemence against his opponents, whether Roman Catholics or other sects which did not follow his pattern, led him to leap "all bounds of love and mercy". In one of his Table Talks he is reported to have said:

"Heretics are not to be disputed with, but to be condemned unheard, and whilst they perish by fire the faithful ought

to pursue the evil to its source and bathe their hands in the blood of the Catholic Bishops, and the Pope, who is a devil in disguise" (Religious Liberty. Bates, p 156.)

12 To the Duke of Saxony, Luther commended both political and religious compulsions. His words are significant. "It will lie heavy on your conscience if you tolerate the Catholic worship for no secular prince can permit his subjects to be divided by the preaching of opposite doctrines" "The fact", as pointed out by William Sweet in his book "Religion in Colonial America," "is that the rise of Protestantism was accompanied by an unprecedented outburst of intolerance and cruelty in which both Protestants and Catholics participated"

13 The spirit of intolerance exhibited either by the Catholics or the Protestants was not confined to heretics or the Jews but was directed even against each other. John Robinson wrote as follows in the early years of the seventeenth century —

"Protestants living in countries of Papists commonly plead for toleration of religions. so do Papists that live where Protestants bear sway though few of either especially of the clergy. would have the other tolerated, where the world goes on their side" (P 155 *ibid*)

Such is the history of religious liberty under Christianity in the West

14. Let us now turn nearer home and study the question of religious liberty under the domination of the Christian countries of the West. As pointed out by Shri K. M. Panikkar in his book "Asia and a Western Dominance", the coming in of the Portuguese in India marks the advent of Christianity on Indian soil. "With the Portuguese, Christianisation was a State enterprise" Since the power was Roman Catholic in its religion, it were the Roman Catholic missionaries who carried on missionary work. On the recommendation of the Pope, King Joao III of Portugal appointed Francis Xavier and sent him to India for the propagation of Christian religion. He landed ashore in 1542 and set to his work in right earnest. He, however, soon realized that without State aid it was not possible to spread Christian religion in India. Writing to Father Rodrigues he said —

"According to my experience the only effective way to spread religion in India is for the King to proclaim by means of an edict to all his officials in India that he shall put trust only in those who will exert themselves to extend the reign of religion by every means in their power"

To King Joao III he wrote as follows :

"To your servants you must declare as plainly as possible that the only way of escaping your wrath and of obtaining your favour is to make as many Christians as possible in the countries over which they rule" (P. 382, *Asia and Western Dominance*)

In 1546, he wrote a letter to the King of Portugal requesting him to establish the Holy Inquisition, as it was called. This "unholy and wicked institution" lasted for nearly two hundred and fifty years. It perpetrated innumerable atrocities on both Christians and non-Christians. It proved the worst of its kind, established anywhere.

15 The Portuguese power became ruthless the more it got itself established in India. Royal Charters were issued from time to time making invidious distinctions between Christians and non-Christians and subjecting the latter to untold disabilities. In 1559 an enactment was passed debarring all Hindus from holding any public office. In the same year another law was enacted confiscating the properties of non-Christian orphans if they refused to be converted to Christianity. Yet another law ordered destruction of Hindu temples and images and prohibited all non-Christian religious festivals. In 1560 all the Brahmans and goldsmiths were ordered to accept Christianity otherwise they were to be turned out of Goa. By a law passed in 1567 the Hindus were prohibited from performing their important religious ceremonies such as investiture of sacred thread, marriage ceremonies and even cremation rites. Hindu religious books were proscribed. All non-Christians above the age of 15 were forced to attend the preaching of Christian religion. Hindu temples were destroyed and in their place churches were built. In 1575 another law was passed by which the Hindu nationals were debarrd from their civic right of renting state land. People of Goa were prohibited to use their native language by an order of 1684 and were allowed three years to learn the Portuguese language under pain of being proceeded against under law of the land.

The aim of all these enactments was to compel the people either to accept Christian religion or to leave the State.

16 The activities of the Christian Mission during the days of Portuguese's sway in India were confined to South India and were carried on by the Catholic Mission. The decay of Portuguese power in 1660 adversely affected the missionary activities in India. The first phase of Christian Missionary activities in India, came to a close by the middle of seventeenth century.

17 From 1660 the second phase in the history of Christianity in India begins. There was a great set back to Christian activities in India during the second phase. In the words of Shri K M Panikkar, "The European Nations that followed the Portuguese in Indian ocean were interested solely in trade and as they were organised as commercial corporations, the question of converting the heathens was of no significance to them." Further the Dutch who followed the Portuguese in the first instance and the British who displaced them ultimately, were Protestants and had no sympathy with the Catholic Order. Till the end of the

eighteenth century the Protestant zeal for Missionary work had not developed. Consequently there was a lull in Christian Missionary activities.

18 From the beginning the policy of the East India Company was one of discouraging the Missionaries. Its primary concern was trade and it was felt that any interference with the religious beliefs and practices and social habits of the people of India would create a prejudice against the company and go against its interests. From 1757 East India Company assumed political power in its hands. Its decision to exclude Missions from territories under its sway became even more definite and pronounced. The fact that organised Protestant Missions with political influence did not exist in England helped the company to uphold and follow its policy of religious neutrality. By the end of the eighteenth century a spirit of evangelism permeated the Protestants as well.

19 A new phase of Christian Missionary activities in India set in with the abolition of the East India Company's monopoly in 1813. Till then no European who was not in the service of the East India Company could set his foot on Indian soil without the permission of the company, but when the ban was removed in 1813, any European could visit India freely and the company had no legal right to stop him.

20 The progress of modern Christian missions in India began with the consolidation of British power in the country. The Catholics had done much work in the land but their work was limited to the areas in the south. The fact that the political influence of the Portuguese was confined to a small part of India did not favour the spread of Christianity to other parts. The number of converts and the areas they belonged to were limited. The field of the Christian work became extensive during British rule in India.

21 Protestant missionary work in India was initiated by Dr William Carey who landed in India in 1793 and settled in Serampore—a Dutch settlement, as the East India Company did not give him any quarter in their territory. Dr Duff joined Dr Carey soon after and the two laid the foundations of Christian missionary work under the Protestant denomination.

22 The war of Independence of 1857 was a turning point in the history of Indian politics. Thereafter the governance of India passed off from the control of the East India Company to that of the British Crown. As regards the cause of the revolt there were two schools of thought in England at that time. The majority view according to Mr Arthur Mayhew, attributed the disaster primarily to popular resentment caused by the Government patronage and support of Christian missionary work in its educational and philanthropic side, by its legislation on Christian principles against social evils such as infanticide, suttee, and converts' loss of civil rights and by the open profession of Christianity and support of

proselytising agencies by many of individual officers". The other view held was that catastrophe was the result of "nervous apprehension of the British Government, its dread of emphasising its true faith and occasional appearance of repudiating it and its pandering to heathen prejudice".

23. There seems little doubt that the mind of the general populace was profoundly disturbed by the new policy in administrative and educational matters that had been followed by the Government since 1815. Things, however, came to a head when under the very aggressive rule of Lord Dalhousie several laws were passed which struck at the very root of Indian social life. In some cases he was no doubt prompted by his zeal to help christianisation of the country. Thus for example, a law was passed preserving the right of inheritance of a convert to Christianity in Hindu family. There was already a seething mass of discontent amongst the people. Thus, only a spark was needed to start the conflagration and the same was provided by the greased cartridges used in rifles. It was suspected that the fat of cow and pig was used for the purpose.

24. The British Government having realised the gravity of the situation decided to make administration of India as a direct responsibility of the British Crown. To allay the excited religious feelings of the people of India Queen Victoria, at the time of assuming direct control, issued the following Proclamation in 1858:—

"Firmly relying ourselves on the truth of Christianity and acknowledging with gratitude the solace of religion, we disclaim alike the right and desire to impose our conviction on any of our subjects. We declare it to be our royal will and pleasure that none be in any wise favoured or molested or discriminated by reason of their faith or observance but that all shall alike enjoy the equal and impartial protection of the law, and we strictly charge and enjoin all those who may be in authority under us that they abstain from all interference with religious belief or worship of any of our subjects on pain of our highest displeasure."

25. The above Royal Proclamation has been considered as the Magna Charta of religious liberty and neutrality. Till the year 1947, the official policy of the British India Government in matters of religion, continued to be that enunciated in the above Royal proclamation.

26. There was however difference between theory and practice. Although the British Government of India were wedded to a policy of religious neutrality, yet indirectly the Christian officials holding positions of importance, afforded considerable encouragement and facilities to the Christian missionaries with whom they had their natural affinity. The Christians under the British rule in India enjoyed a privileged position. To quote R. M. Panikkar

from his book "Asia and Western Dominance", "Legislation protected the rights of the converts to their share in the Hindu joint families and the decision of the High Courts enabled converts to blackmail their wives to follow them into the fold of their new religion. The Government also encouraged the Missionaries to work among the backward tribes, being satisfied that Hindu opinion would not be offended by it." The author further adds—"On the whole however it may be said that the British Officials preserved an attitude of neutrality and the British Government always vigilant, in matters affecting law and order and the loyalty of the elements on which they depend for their rule discouraged methods of propaganda offensive to the Hindu sentiments".

27 Before Christian Domination, India was under Muslim domination. Although the first Muslim invasion of India took place in 711 A.D., yet "consistently progressive conquest" of India began about the year 1000 A.D. It was however from the sixteenth century onward that the "Muslims dominated Hindu society, in a political and military sense". Babar and Akbar however tended to be "indifferent to all, but the political aspects of religion". But Akbar's son, Shah Jahan, ordered in 1633, "the destruction of Hindu temples, which the faithful had begun openly to erect in his father's time". Intermarriages of Hindus and Muslims which were frequent in the Punjab and Kashmir were prohibited. "Aurangzeb, the puritan champion of Islam", writes Searle Bates, 'pled persecution upon repression'. In 1669 he issued orders "to the Governor of all the provinces to demolish the schools and temples of the infidels and put down their teaching and religious practices strongly". As a result a large number of Hindu shrines, including the famous Hindu places of worship suffered destruction. "Gross desecration", writes Searle Bates, on page 270 of his book Religious Liberty, "was frequently added, such as the killing of cows in sanctuaries and the trampling of idols in public squares. In 1679 Aurangzeb reimposed "the Jizya Tax on the unbelievers with the object of spreading Islam and overthrowing infidel practices". Hindu religious fairs were prohibited. People were encouraged to embrace Islam by the offer "of grants to converts or of jobs in Government employ, or of liberation from prison". These measures resulted in "a noticeable bulk of accessions", to the Muslim immigrant minority from "weak portions of heterogeneous Indian Society". "The Mohamadan invasions", in the words of Searle Bates, "helped to extinguish the fading Buddhism and were severe upon the Jains. The Sikhs, a relatively late sect to arise within Hinduism, preserved themselves by strong organization and by military powers, alike difficult to overwhelm and valuable to placate".

28 According to Searle Bates, "In general India has not thought or organised or legislated in terms of the oppression of religion or of the liberty of religion. Striving of religio-social groups there has been" (P 271 Religious Liberty)



29 Coming to more recent times we find that in 1921 there was a Unity Conference held at Delhi. Quite a number of Indian representatives of various religious communities and political leaders attended the Conference. Mahatma Gandhi took a prominent part in the deliberations. The Conference passed a resolution on religious liberty which runs as follows —

“This Conference is emphatically of opinion that the utmost freedom of conscience and religion is essential and condemns any desecration of places of worship to whatsoever faith they may belong, and any persecution or punishment of any person for adopting or reverting to any faith, and further condemns any attempt by compulsion to convert people to any one's faith or to enforce one's own religious observance at the cost of the rights of others.

“With a view to give effect to the general principles promoting better relations between the various communities in India laid down in the above resolution and to secure full toleration of all faiths, beliefs and religious practice, this conference records its opinion

“That every individual or group shall have full liberty to hold and give expression to his or their beliefs and follow any religious practice, with due regard to the feelings of others and without interfering with their rights. In no case may such individual or group revile the founder, holy persons or tenets of any other faith.

“That every individual is at liberty to follow any faith and to change it whenever he wills and shall not be reason of such change of faith render himself liable to any punishment or persecution at the hands of the followers of the faith renounced by him.

“That every individual or group is at liberty to convert or reconvert another by argument or persuasion but must not attempt to do so, or prevent its being done, by force, fraud, or other unfair means such as the offering of material inducement. Persons under sixteen years of age should not be converted unless it be along with their parents or guardians, by a person of another faith. If any person under sixteen years of age is found stranded without his parents or guardians, he should be promptly handed over to a person of his own faith. There must be no secrecy about any conversion or reconversion.”

Such in brief is the History of religious liberty in Europe and India, with special reference to Christianity.

30 We have so far dealt with the history of “Religious Liberty.” Let us now consider the question of Religious liberty as it exists today in various countries (other than India)

31 There are at present four great religions prevailing in the world, viz, Hinduism, Buddhism, Christianity and Islam. Hinduism prevails in India alone. Buddhism prevails in China and Japan. Islam prevails in Turkey, Egypt, Iran, Afghanistan and Pakistan.

32 The Christian countries of the world may be divided into three categories, viz, first those where Catholic Church is the prevailing church and secondly those where Protestant Church predominates, thirdly where orthodox church prevails. Prominent under the first category are the States of Italy, Spain, Belgium and Portugal. Russia and Greece are the countries of the Orthodox Church.

33 Let us first take Italy, which is the official seat of Catholic Church, being the residence of the Pope, head of the Catholic religion. Before Italy became Fascist, the state was subordinate to the Church. The Pope dictated even the politics. When Mussolini came in power the relations of the Church and the State were re-adjusted by mutual consent under what is known as Concordat. Art I of the Concordat lays down —

“Italy recognises the Catholic religion as the sole religion of the State.”

Previous to the Lateran Agreement of 1929, Art I of the Constitution of Italy read as follows —

“The Apostolic Roman Catholic religion is the only religion of the State. Other cults now existing are tolerated in conformity of law.”

34 Pope Pius XI interpreted the said article as implying that any discussion of religion, written or oral, which might “easily mislead the good faith of the less enlightened” must be punished by law. In Italy it is only the Catholic religion that is provided unqualified protection under the penal code (Arts 402-405) against public abuse and libelous attacks. If such offences are committed against other churches, extenuating circumstances are to be considered in assessing the offence.

35 In the matter of education, Art 36 of the Concordat lays down —

“Italy considers Christian doctrine in a form handed down by the Catholic tradition as the basis and apex of public education.”

Such education in Italy can be imparted only by teachers or priests approved by the Church authorities and any withdrawal of approval is at once effective against the teacher.

“Liberty of Conscience” in a Catholic State was interpreted to mean “liberty to accept the Church’s guidance of conscience without interference by the State.” (Religious Liberty: pp 42—45)

36. Next in importance to Italy amongst the Catholic countries is Spain. "Religious liberty for other than Roman Catholics", says M. Searle Bates in his "Religious Liberty and Inquiry", "scarcely exists in Spain today, as has been largely true throughout the modern history of the country."

37. The Catholic Church in Spain, in course of time, became a dominating power which had "subjugated the political power and was nearly omnipotent in public, social and economic life". There was reaction against this among the inhabitants and hence the Spanish Revolution of 1931-39. The frenzy of the lovers of political freedom was let loose against the Church administration in Spain. The Church in Spain came in for persecution at the hands of the Fascists who subscribed to atheism. It is said that 20,000 churches were destroyed or looted, 16,000 priests, monks and nuns were either executed or murdered and 300,000 inhabitants lost their lives. Peace was ultimately restored after the bloodbath between the Church and the State. The accord with the Holy See reaffirmed the four articles of the Concordat of 1851 which ran as follows:—

"(1) Catholicism continues to be the sole religion of the Spanish nation, to the exclusion of any other, and is always to be maintained with all the right and privilege which it should have in accordance with God's law and the prescriptions of the sacred canons."

(2) Instruction in all schools shall conform in all respects to the doctrines of the Catholic religion, and therefore bishops and their aides shall have full and free supervision over the purity of faith and customs and the religious education of youth, even in public schools.

(3) All authorities shall be charged with showing and causing others to show the bishops and the clergy the respect and consideration due to them according to divine precepts, and the Government shall grant effective protection and support to the bishops wherever they request it, particularly when they combat, "the iniquity of men who attempt to pervert the souls of the faithful and to corrupt customs," or whenever it is necessary to prevent the publication or circulation of evil or harmful books.

(4) In all other matters relative to the exercise of ecclesiastical authority and to the ministry of holy orders, the bishops and the clergy shall enjoy full liberty according to the sacred canons"—"Religious Liberty", pp. 14 to 19.

38. The Church has regained its position in Spain. The head of the State has an important say in the selection of the Spanish bishops and archbishops, although the Pope participates in the process. Catechism is obligatory in all State Schools and the baptising of all children is insisted upon.

39 In Spain, Catholic Church occupies a privileged position "One people, one State, one leader, one faith, one Church" is the common slogan "No rights or status", says Searle Bates, "exist for other religious beliefs or organisations of any sort" A police order of 1940 decrees that, "through a generous tolerance of religious opinions of foreigners who reside in our country, in so far as they are not opposed to Christian morality or infringe upon police and health regulations, "foreigners may continue to gather in chapels in which rites and ceremonies different from the Catholic religion are celebrated" The "general tolerance", further orders that foreigners "must withdraw from the walls, entrances, doors and other visible places, any lettering, emblem, flag, or other sign which might lead to confusion of the said chapels with churches of the Roman Catholic religion"—'Religious Liberty', pp 19 and 20

40 Not to speak of freedom of conscience being guaranteed to non-believers in Spain, even the believers not subscribing to the tenets of the Catholic Church have no religious liberty in Spain as is evident from the following extract from the Report on Religious Liberty by Searle Bates —

"According to the reports of the year 1944, it seems that twenty out of two hundred Spanish Protestant churches are now open Some pastors have been driven out of the country and others work under persecution, covert or naked All Protestant schools were closed In the large cities members are able to get along, but in smaller communities recognised Protestants are commonly refused employment, sale of goods and government relief No Spaniard can secure a certificate for leaving school or can enter the Civil Service unless he has official evidence of instruction in the Roman Catholic religion"—"Religious Liberty, p 20"

41 Portugal is often presented by the Catholic Missionaries as the Catholic State *par excellence* founded on the religious, political and social principles of the great encyclicals from Leo XIII to the present day There is no State Church as such in Portugal The Concordat, however, provides in Articles II and III an open course for the Catholic Church in the Portuguese Republic —

"The Catholic Church may freely exercise her authority, in all the matters within her competence, she may carry out without impediment any acts consonant with her rules and jurisdiction

The Catholic Church in Portugal may organise herself freely in harmony with the provisions of Canon Law and thereby constitute associations and organisations whose personality at law the State shall recognise"—"Religious Liberty", pages 97 and 98



means, fair and foul, to bring them under the obedience of the Pope, and to a profession of the orthodox faith. By dint of wholesale employment of force, bribery, they succeeded in subjugating the larger part of them."

45. In Columbia the Catholics have forbidden the evangelistic activity of non-Catholics, i.e., to proselytise or propagandise outside their places of worship (page 246, National Christian Council Review, May 1954)

46 "France" in the words of Seale Bates, "has not, since 1870, been considered a "Catholic country" in the old meaning and not in recent years a "Catholic State" in the new sense of corporative structure based on the doctrines of the encyclical fully supporting the Catholic Religion and Catholic education. Yet France remains a nation in which Catholicism is first and dominant among religious influences (Reli Lib p 103)

"SWEDEN maintains a constitution of the year 1809. Article 2 requires "The King shall always belong to the pure evangelical faith as adopted and explained in the unaltered Augsburg Confession and in the resolution of the Upsala Synod of 1593" The King's ministers must belong to "The pure evangelical Faith" as so defined (Article 4) Freedom from constraint of conscience and protection of every one "in the free exercise of his religion, provided he does not thereby disturb public order or occasion general offence," are secured by article 16. To offices other than that of royal minister adherents of other Christian faiths and of Judaism may be appointed, but "no person not belonging to the pure evangelical faith shall take part, as Judge or in any other position, in the discussion or decision of questions relating to divine worship, to religious instruction, or to appointments within the Swedish Church" (Article 28) Reli Lib. p 524

47 The imparting of religious instruction is compulsory in the State elementary, secondary and teacher training schools for all pupils whose parents are members of the State Church. Only members of the State Church are appointed as teachers. Denominational groups and persons not members of the State Church are not permitted to establish their own schools for children. Up to the end of the 19th century Sweden was a Lutheran State in the full sense of the word and liberty of conscience was non-existent.

"All administrative and judicial posts, the entire teaching and medical professions, required a Lutheran profession of faith. Attempt to get a Lutheran to change his confession were penal offences, and apostasy from the State religion made a Swede liable to banishment for life" Reli Lib p 205

48 NORWEGIAN constitution is as old as 1814 with amendment from time to time. Article 2 of the Constitution declares:

"The Evangelical Lutheran religion shall remain the public religion of the State. Such inhabitants as profess this religion

are required to educate their children therein. Jesuits shall not be admitted." Article 4 implies active furtherance of the State religion by the Government, which acts for the sovereign. The King shall always profess, maintain and defend the Evangelical Lutheran religion, "More than half the King's ministers must belong to the State church. On the other hand, the king and his ministers prescribe the ritual and worship of the Church, appoint and discipline the clergy (Articles 12, 16, 21) Reli. Lib p. 523

The Cardinal principle of educational policy of Norway is that the children should receive "Christian education". Therefore, religious instruction is compulsory for all pupils in State elementary, secondary and normal schools. Except as exemption is claimed by parents who have left the State Church. Class teachers given religious instruction and are appointed with the approval of the Bishop. Non-conformist schools are not given any State-aid. (Reli Lib p 332).

49 In DENMARK Lutheran Church is the State Church. King must be a member of the Church. The State controls and subsidises the activities of the Church and has not yet given it a separate constitution (Reli Lib p. 109).

The Danish constitution of 1915 is based upon the document of 1849. Article 3 of the Constitution lays down—

"The Evangelical Lutheran Church is the national Church of Denmark and as such it is supported by the State" (Reli Lib p. 523).

In schools under State management all children receive instruction in the Bible, Shorter Catechism and Hymns in the lower classes and in church history in the upper class. Each child of fourteen years or more belonging to the State Church, is obliged to attend "Confirmation classes" twice a year but can be exempted from actual confirmation on application (Reli. Liberty p. 104)

50. Of the European States subscribing to Orthodox Christian Church, Russia is the most important example "At no time and in no land has the world known so dramatic a denial of religious liberty as in Russia since 1918". The provisional Government (1917) had freed all recognised Churches from State control and interference. By the beginning of 1918, the Soviet decrees "nationalized Church property and the schools, instituted civil marriage and separated the Orthodox Church from State and school alike." Freedom of conscience was granted and all restrictions of rights based on belief or non-belief were annulled. Religious instruction in private was authorised, but was barred from all public or private schools, where general subjects were taught. (Reli. Liberty p 2)

Up to 1929 the Constitutions of the various republics constituting the Soviet Union contained the following article :

"In order to provide the workers actual freedom of conscience, the church is separated from the State, and the school from the church, while freedom for religious and anti-religious propaganda is recognised for all citizens 'The Stalin Constitution of 1936', still in force, has the following provisions —

"For the purpose of providing to citizens freedom of conscience, the Church in the U S S R is separated from the State, and the school from the Church, freedom for the conduct of religious cults and freedom for anti-religious propaganda is recognised for all citizens" (Article 124)

The period from 1937 to 1939 was a period of persecution of the Church leaders and the Church. In 1938 alone several prominent bishops were shot, while over fifty bishops were sent to prison or to the concentration camps. A heavy rent charge was imposed upon Church buildings with the result that in 1937 alone 1,100 orthodox churches and hundreds of other places of worship were forced to close. The Soviet statistics for 1940 showed that there were then 4,225 listed Orthodox Churches with 5,665 priests as against 46,457 such churches and 50,960 priests before the revolution 1917. There were 28 Orthodox bishops and 37 monasteries in 1940, as compared to 130 bishops and 1,026 monasteries before Revolution.

The situation, however, changed by 1944. The Central Organisation of the Russian Orthodox Church has been officially restored (Religious Liberty, pp 4—9)

51 Second in importance amongst the countries having Orthodox Church is GREECE. The Constitution of Greece grants freedom and protection of rights to every recognised religion. The Church of Hellas is established by the State, which pays the bishops and exercises supervision of all temporal matters in church affairs. Spiritual authority vests in the synod of all the bishops. Marriages and baptism of evangelical groups are recognised as valid.

Art I of the constitution lays down as follows —

"The Dominant religion in Greece is that of the Eastern Orthodox Church of Christ"

"The Orthodox Church of Greece is inseparably united from the dogmatic point of view, with the Great Church of Jesus, Constantinople, and every other Church of Jesus Christ of the same dogmas, observing immutably, like it, the holy apostolic and conciliar canons and the holy traditions. It is autocephalic. It exercises independently of every other Church its sovereign rights and it is administered by a Holy Synod of arch bishops. The ministers of every cult are subject to the same surveillance on the part of the State as those of the dominant religion."



"The liberty of conscience is inviolable.

All the known cults may be exercised freely under the protection of the Law, provided they are not contrary to public order or to good morals. Proselytism is forbidden." (Religious Liberty, p 525)

The official definition of term Proselytism as given below not only guard against the possibilities of its abuse but prevents any religious change even by persuasion or information

"Any attempt by force, or threats or illicit means, or grants of promises of financial or other aid, or by fraudulent means or promises, or by moral and material assistance, or by taking advantage of any person's inexperience or confidence or by exploiting any person's necessity or spiritual (mental) weakness or thoughtlessness, or in general, any attempt or effort (whether successful or not) directly or indirectly to penetrate into religious conscience of persons (whether of age or under age) of another faith, for the purpose of consciously altering their religious conscience or faith, so as to agree with the ideas or convictions of the proselytising party."—(Religious Liberty, p 112)

52 Of the remaining Christian countries, Great Britain, Germany and U S A deserve special mention

53 Question of religious liberty in GREAT BRITAIN centred round the historic position of the Church of England as the National Church. The King and the Lord Chancellor must be members of the Church of England. Twenty-four bishops and two arch-bishops are members of the House of Lords. The Church enjoys properties and endowments

The problem of the church schools and religious education in State schools of England has aroused controversy. In the elementary and secondary schools under the control and management of the Church of England religious instruction is imparted. In the State school religious education does not exist. Some persons in localities of the first type wanted religious instruction to be non-sectarian or varied from the Church of England type or voluntary only. Some parents in localities of the second type asked for more positive religious instruction being imparted to their children than was the case. Dr Henson has suggested a solution. He says

"If instruction in Christian faith and morals were made compulsory (subject to a conscience clause) in all schools, if the State limited its direct concerns to secular subjects and entrusted the religious instruction to the local education authorities, there is little reason for doubting that in a very short time the problem would be happily solved." (Religious Liberty, page 88)

54 In GERMANY before the National Socialist Party came in power it reassured the various religions by including the following demand as one of the Twenty-five points it stood for—

“We demand religious freedom for all denominations, so long as they do not endanger the stability of the State or offend against the German people’s instincts of morality and decency. The party as such takes its stand on a positive Christianity, without committing itself to any particular creed.”

As soon as it came in power, it assumed, “that religion could be utilised for its own purposes of unity and morale and that autonomous elements of faith, spirit and organisation could be assimilated or crushed.” Dr Adolf Keller, a Swiss writer, says in his book “The Church and the State” as follows —

“In the legislation and church policy of the State since 1933 an effort has been made to adapt or to assimilate the Church to the State to include her life within that of the nation, to introduce the principles of national socialism into the fellowship of Christ, to impose the Fuehrer principle upon her and to make her a school of National Socialist Education.

“The usurpation of State power into Church administration, the imprisonment of bishops, the banishment and harsh treatment of pastors, the closing of churches, questionable electioneering methods, the financial privation, were means used during this period, which were regarded by the confessional group as persecution and misuse of State power to the undue advantage of one party in the Church.” (Religious Liberty, pp 21-22)

The Church rose up in resistance against the totalitarian dictatorship. In the Evangelical Church Manifesto of 1935 the issue was made clear —

“The German people is facing a decision of greatest historical importance. The question is whether the Christian faith is to retain its right to exist or not.

Powers of the State and of the party are being used against the Gospel of Jesus Christ and against those who profess it.

Three years ago millions of Evangelical Germans welcomed the new beginning in the life of our people with warm hearts. They did so with all the more joy because the Government of our Nation had said in its first proclamation of February 1, 1933, that it would ‘firmly protect Christianity’ as the basis of our whole moral system.” (Religious Liberty, page 25)

The principle of religious liberty was thrown to the winds. There was not only interference by the State in religious matters, but violation of religious liberty.—

“One of the major breaches of religious liberty has been the gross interference with pastors and priests and their work. By October of 1934 more than 1,000 pastors had been arrested or had suffered some form of police intervention. On the

In the words of Dr Zollman

“If there is any one thing which is well settled in the policies and purposes of the American people as a whole, it is the fixed and unalterable determination that there shall be an absolute and unequivocal separation of Church and State, and that our public school system supported by the taxation of the property of all alike—Catholic, Protestant, Jew, gentile, believer and infidel—shall not be used directly or indirectly for religious instruction, and, above all, *that it shall not be made an instrumentality of proselyting influence in favour of any religious organisation, sect, creed, or belief*” [Religious Liberty, p 339.]

59 We have so far dealt with the countries under the sway of Christianity with reference to the religious liberty that their constitutions allow. Let us now deal in passing with the countries where Buddhism is the dominant religion. They are Japan and China

Article XXVIII of the Constitution of JAPANESE EMPIRE reads thus

“Japanese subjects shall, within limits of law, not prejudicial to peace and order and not antagonistic to their duties as subjects, enjoy freedom of religious belief”

Religious freedom is limited to belief. It is to be exercised within limits of law of the land and consistent with the duties of the individual to the State as its subject. (Religious Liberty, p 49.)

The idea about the Emperor of Japanese Empire as something of the divine is peculiar to the Japanese. In the words of a distinguished member and officer of the Diet, “He (the Emperor) is to the Japanese mind the Supreme Being in the Cosmos of Japan, as God is in the universe of the Pantheistic philosopher. From him everything emanates, in him everything subsists. He is supreme in temporal affairs of the State as well as in all spiritual matters”—[Religious Liberty, p 51]

Shinto is the State religion. In the words of Professor Genchi Kato,—

“This is not a religion adopted purposely by the State as are the State religions in the West, but the religion of the heart and life of every Japanese, male and female, high and low, old and young, educated and illiterate. For this reason a Japanese never ceases to be Shintoist, an inborn and steadfast holder of the national faith of the way of the Gods as a group religion, as distinguished from a personal or individual religion, even though he may adopt the tenets of Buddhism or Confucianism—probably Christianity in Japan has not been excepted—as his personal or individual religion. In effect this means that rejection of Shinto by a Japanese would signify

treachery to the Empire and disloyalty to its Divine Ruler. The Emperor is incarnate Deity and occupies in the Japanese faith the position which Jehova occupied in Judaism. We cannot pass over the fact that these ceremonials (at the shrines) are accompanied by a faith in the divine aid of a great spiritual power"—[Religious Liberty, page 51]

"Private religions", says Searle Bates, "may be cherished in addition but not in conflict, in subordination to the State religion, not in absolute allegiance"

All education in Japan is dominated by the Imperial Rescript on Education. The elementary schools of the State are compulsory and universal, with uniform text-books prepared by the Department of Education. Secondary and higher schools, public and private, vary somewhat in type but not in programme and directives in so far as civic and moral education are concerned

60 We now come to CHINA. To quote Searle Bates,—

"China is essentially a secular country, say some, a country of diffuse and diverse religions, say others"

Article 15 of the Constitution says

"Every citizen shall have freedom of religious belief, such freedom shall not be restricted except in accordance with the Law"—[Religious Liberty, page 510]

61 There is no dominant religious faith in working relation to the State. The social and ethical teaching of Confucianism are widely influential in the cultural nationalism of the country. The Buddhist religion has been accepted into the general culture. Confucianism, Buddhism, Mohammedanism and Christianity are the established religions in China. There is a constitutional pledge to religious freedom. Despite multiplicity of religious faiths, China is known as "a land of tolerance and social harmony"

China has no religious instruction in the public system and refuses recognition to elementary or junior or middle schools which impart religious instruction. Senior middle school and colleges may have elective course in religion and religious exercises. The official position is summarised in the following Government reply to a petition submitted by twelve church bodies for permission to impart religious instruction in private schools —

"To sum up, there is not only one religion. If we allow each religion in the name of education to vie one with another to propagate religion, the natural tendency will be to create division and strife. The Ministry of Education, in order to guard against such a possible future calamity, is obliged to impose these restrictions which do not apply only to Christianity but to the other religions as well.

Hence, to have elective religious courses in junior middle schools and to have the privilege of worship in primary schools embodies obstacles too difficult to permit the Ministry to grant the request"—[Religious Liberty, page 343]

62 We have dealt above with Religious Liberty as provided under the constitutions of countries under Christian and Buddhist domination. Let us now have just a passing review of the Religious Liberty in the Muslim countries.

ISLAM controls the entire life of the Muslims. According to Islamic conception, "Church, State and the Community are one entity." "Orthodox Islam", writes M. Searle Bates, (P. 9) "is the contrary on religious liberty and finds no room for the concept as developed in Western lands. In principle it forbids apostasy under dire penalty and provides for change of faith only toward Islam." Another English writer S. A. Morrison writes in his book "Religious Liberty in the Near East" as follows —

"Freedom of religion in the Near East has been commonly understood to mean freedom of worship, that is, the right of each community to conduct its religious services in its own way without official interference. The wider meaning of religious freedom, implying the right to persuade others or to change one's faith, has never gained general acceptance."

The writer goes on—

"Nothing arouses the resentment of Muslim officials and of public opinion so much as the mention of Christian evangelistic work (tabshir). On the other hand, every facility is given to pro-Islamic propaganda, and governments themselves lend their support to it, as an adjunct to their policy of nationalism. The way is made easy for conversion from Judaism and Christianity to Islam, and various inducements financial or matrimonial, are dangled before the potential convert. Economic discrimination against members of minority groups in the Government service and in private firms has been a potent factor in many so-called conversions. (Religious Liberty in the Near East, pp. 9-10)

Illustrating this point, M. Searle Bates points out that IRAN forbids religious propaganda in general and absolutely prohibits "proselytizing" of minors. The law of the land assures freedom of worship but permits meeting only in churches, not even in private houses. (Religious Liberty by Bates, p. 10)

63 EGYPT'S constitution declares that "Islam is the religion of the State." A Royal decree is necessary for the building of a church. The TURKISH Constitution allows freedom of service and provides that "no one can be disturbed on account of the religion, rite, or sect to which he belongs, nor for the philosophic opinions which he professes. All ritualistic ceremonies which are not contrary to the public order or morals, or inconsistent with the law, are

authorized" The civil code of Turkey declares that adults of eighteen years and over are free to adhere to the religion of their choice. Proselytising in general is severely discouraged, and in the case of the young it is kept far outside of practical possibilities. (Religious Liberty, pp 10, 13)

Death penalty for apostasy from Islam is presumed to be still effective in parts of Afghanistan and Central Arabia

64. Writing about religious freedom in education S A Morrison says in his book on page 9

"It is perhaps in the field of education that Christian missionary work has been most resented, Muslim Governments claiming that it is their duty to protect Muslim children from exposure to the teaching of a religion other than their own. Thus the parents are denied the right of deciding the form of religious education which their children shall receive. Some Near East Governments have gone further in requiring instruction in Islam for Muslim pupils in all schools."

For example, in Egypt teaching a pupil a religion other than his own while he is still a minor and incapable of true discernment, is declared as an offence against public order and morals. The teaching of Islam according to prescribed syllabus, to all Muslim students, whether reading in Government or Mission schools, is compulsory.

The fundamental position of the Government of Egypt is well-stated in a circular of the Ministry of Education, issued in 1940

"Without question, to teach a pupil a religion other than his own, while he is a minor and incapable of true discernment, is an offence against public order and morals. No State which recognizes its duties towards its subjects for the protection of their religious beliefs approves it. The freedom guaranteed to religious beliefs does not approve it, either. This freedom is undermined if an educational institution seeks to influence young pupils by teaching them beliefs other than their own" (Religious Liberty, p 12 by Bates)

"The medical, social and educational work of foreign missions", says S A Morrison, in his book, "is generally appreciated so long as it is felt to be divorced from any religious or political objective. If, however, there is suspicion that foreign missions are the agents of a foreign political power, or of a foreign culture, or are actively propagating the Christian faith, steps are usually taken to curtail their freedom. Direct limitations may be imposed in the name of public order, or because Christian missionary work may be said to contravene "good morals". Alternatively, the restriction may be indirect, through the control of visas or transfer of money from abroad" (Religious Liberty, in the Near East p 10)

65 "In Muslim eyes", writes S. A. Morrison, on page 9 of the same book "the apostate is traitor, both to his religion and to his community". The spirit of nationalism which has emerged in the countries of Middle East also as a result of secular spirit prevailing in the advanced countries of the West, lays emphasis on the necessity of "National Unity, based on a common culture," and whether the basis of this Unity was sought in race, as in Turkey, or in religion, as in most other Muslim countries. 'Christian and Jewish minorities with their different culture came to be regarded as elements of weakness within the national organism'.

"Fear of all forms of western imperialistic penetration in the Near East. Political, economic or cultural is another factor that has affected adversely the position of the minorities", says S. A. Morrison

66 There exists at present a deep rooted suspicion of foreign imperialism in the minds of the people of the Near East countries and only too often their belief is that, directly or indirectly missions are the agents of a foreign Government. Government of the Near East countries are in particular, 'suspicious of foreign educational institutions, lest these be used for either religious or political propaganda'.

'Belief in religious liberty', says S. A. Morrison 'was the result of a long drawn-out struggle in western countries. That struggle is as yet in its early stages in Muslim lands. Some Muslims have caught the vision and would hasten its realisation by the complete separation of religion and politics.

"The major issue in Near East countries today is", Says S. A. Morrison "whether they will follow the road of modern democracy towards equality of all citizens irrespective of their race or religion or whether they will cling to the Orthodox Muslim conception of the superiority in all aspects of life of the Muslim over the non-Muslim".

67 Such in brief are the constitutional provisions pertaining to religious liberty in the various countries. In the next chapter we shall consider the position pertaining to the Religious Liberty under the constitution of Free India.

## CHAPTER II—RELIGIOUS LIBERTY UNDER THE INDIAN CONSTITUTION

India having deliberately decided to follow the road of modern democracy towards equality of all citizens irrespective of their race or religion, it will be interesting to examine the extent of religious liberty permitted by the Constitution of India

- 2 The Preamble to the Constitution secures to all its citizens
  - (a) Justice, social, economic and political
  - (b) Liberty of thought, expression, belief, faith and worship
  - (c) Equality of status and of opportunity, without any distinction of caste, creed or colour

- 3 Religious liberty guaranteed under the Constitution is dealt with under more than one heading viz
  - (a) Freedom of conscience, of free profession, practice and propagation of religion
  - (b) Freedom to manage religious affairs
  - (c) Freedom to establish and administer educational institutions

4 Freedom vouchsafed by the Constitution under the above headings is, however, not absolute but is subject to certain restrictions deemed essential in the interest of the welfare of the State. Thus, article 25 (1) lays down that the freedom of conscience and the right freely to profess, practice and propagate religion is subject to "public order, morality and health". Paragraph 2 of the same article further lays down that "Nothing in this article shall affect the operation of any existing law or prevent the State from making any law regulating or restricting any economic, financial, political, or other secular activity which may be associated with religious practice". Similarly, article 26 of the Constitution contains a provision to the effect that "The right to establish and maintain institutions for religious and charitable purposes and to own and administer movable and immovable property acquired for the above purposes and even the right to manage its own affairs in matters of religion is subject to public order, morality and health". The administration of property is further subject to the law of the land.

- 5 The State, not being wedded to any one religion, follows a policy of religious neutrality in the matter of education. Article 28 (1) of the Indian Constitution lays down.
 

"No religious instruction shall be provided in any educational institution wholly maintained out of State funds."



Private bodies, however, have been guaranteed freedom to establish and administer educational institutions of their own choice and to impart religious instruction therein subject to the "Conscience Clause" Article 28 (3) runs as follows —

"No person attending any educational institution recognised by the State or receiving aid out of State funds shall be required to take part in any religious instruction that may be imparted in such institution or to attend any religious worship that may be conducted in such institution or in any premises attached thereto unless such person or, if such person is a minor, his guardian has given his consent thereto"

The doors of both the State and the Government-aided private schools are open alike to all the citizens Admission to these Temples of Knowledge cannot be refused on the basis of "religion, race, caste, language, or any of them" Article 29 (2) says

"No citizen shall be denied admission into any educational institution maintained by the State or receiving aid out of State funds on grounds only of religion, race, caste, language or any of them"

6 The Constitution of India provides against discrimination in administration on the basis of religion Article 15 (1) says

"The State shall not discriminate against any citizen on grounds only of religion, race, caste, sex, place of birth or any of them"

Similarly, article 16 (1) and (2) provides for equality of opportunity to all citizens in the matter of public employment It says .

"There shall be equality of opportunity for all citizens in matters relating to employment or appointment to any office under the State

(2) No citizen shall, on grounds only of religion, race, caste, sex, descent, place of birth, residence or any of them, be ineligible for, or discriminated against in respect of, any employment or office under the State"

In the matter of award of grant-in-aid to denominational educational institutions, discrimination on the basis of religion is ruled out under the Constitution Article 30 (1) runs thus

"The State shall not, in granting aid to educational institutions, discriminate against any educational institution on the ground that it is under the management of a minority whether based on religion or language"

7 In considering the Fundamental Rights given under the Constitution one should not forget its preamble The preamble is not like the preambles of other ordinary Acts It is a solemn

declaration of our whole purpose. In fact it is the very seed which has sprouted, grown into mighty tree and borne fruits in the subsequent Chapters and Articles of the Constitution.

This preamble, as has been quoted in the beginning, says that

“We, the people of India . . . give to ourselves this Constitution in order to secure to all its citizens Justice, Liberty, Equality, Fraternity”

There is no doubt that a Constitution though mainly meant for its citizens has also to provide for foreigners living within its territory. Our Constitution has also done that. But a distinction has to be drawn between the rights available to its citizens and those available to a foreigner, even as the duties towards the State of citizen and a foreigner are not the same. Quite a number of provisions are undoubtedly applicable to all persons residing in the country irrespective of the fact whether they are Indian Nationals or aliens. For example, article 14 of the Constitution declares that “the State shall not deny to any person equality before the law or the equal protection of the laws within the territory of India”. The safety of persons and personal property of all persons, citizens or non-citizens, are guaranteed under Articles 20, 21, 22 and 31 of the Constitution. Article 25 likewise guarantees freedom of conscience to all the inhabitants of the State. There are, however, some other provisions of the Constitution which confer rights exclusively on the citizens of India. Thus under Article 19 (1) certain rights regarding freedom of the individual appertain to citizens only. The article is given below —

(1) All citizens shall have the right—

- (a) to freedom of speech and expression ,
- (b) to assemble peaceably and without arms ,
- (c) to form associations or unions
- (d) to move freely throughout the territory of India ,
- (e) to reside and settle in any part of the territory of India ;
- (f) to acquire, hold and dispose of property , and
- (g) to practise any profession, or to carry on any occupation, trade or business

The “Seven Freedoms” guaranteed under Article 19 (1) are, however, subject to five limitations contained in clauses (2) to (6) of the same Article. These restrictions may be imposed by the “State” Legislatures in the interest of the security of State, public order, decency or morality, protection of Scheduled Tribes, etc.

The distinction made in the Constitution between citizen and non-citizen has an important bearing on the rights and duties of the foreigners, and have special significance for the purpose of our enquiry.

8 We have quoted in this chapter constitutional provisions relating to religious liberty in India. In the foregoing chapter we dealt with the facts of religious liberty under the respective constitutions of other countries. A comparative study discloses that, viewed in the light of religious liberty, the countries of the world may be divided under two main categories, viz —

- (1) Theocratic States, i.e. those having State religion.
- (2) Secular States, i.e., those having no State religion.

By the very nature of things there are likely to be discriminations and preferences whether overt or covert, in favour of the State religion in the States under the first category. Followers of the State religion enjoy rights and privileges which are denied to others. The principle of equality of all religions cannot, therefore, fully operate in these States.

An overwhelmingly large majority of Islamic and many of the Christian countries fall under this category.

9. Secular States may be further sub-divided into two classes, viz —

- (a) Those where the very idea of religion is hated and discarded as a dangerous thing.
- (b) Where religion as such is respected.

In the former countries it can be said that religious liberty has no place, not for the reason that the State is wedded to any particular religion and therefore there is leaning of the State in favour of that religion, but for the reason that all religions are looked upon with disfavour. There is therefore no freedom for any religion. Communist countries would fall under this category.

In countries under the second heading, there is equal regard for all religions and no discrimination in favour of any one. The followers of all religions are allowed freedom to profess and practise a religion of their choice subject to certain qualifications (e.g., public order) applicable to the followers of all religions without any distinction.

India falls under the second heading. There is no doubt that there is a multiplicity of religions in India. But India seeks "unity in diversity". It is only through a "reverential approach" to faiths other than one's own that one can realise "the principle of equality of all religions".

We can do no better than quote from Mahatma Gandhi's writings about the need of the hour :

"The need of the moment is not one religion, but mutual respect and tolerance of the devotees of the different religions. We want to reach not the dead level, but unity in diversity."

Any attempt to root out traditions, effects of heredity, climate and other surroundings is not only bound to fail but is a sacrilege. The soul of religions is one, but it is encased in a multitude of forms. The latter will persist to the end of time" (Christian Missions, p. 34, *Nava Jivan Press*)

10 Following this dictum of the Father of the Nation, the framers of the Constitution, in their anxiety to preserve the secular nature of our State, have guaranteed equality to all religions. But if the followers of any one religion deny it not only in their mental attitude but in their outward conduct and behaviour, then it becomes the duty of the State to keep an eye on the religious activities of the votaries of different religions and to step in wherever there is any misuse of their rights threatening public order or solidarity of country. This is an obligation imposed by the Constitution

11 This is borne out from the discussions that took place in the Constituent Assembly when this Article 25 of the Constitution (Article 19 of the Draft Constitution) was being considered. Dealing with the scope of Article 25 (then Article 19) Shri K. Santhanam, Lieut. Governor of Vindhya Pradesh, then a member of the Drafting Committee, spoke as follows —

"Sir, I stand here to support this article. This article has to be read with Article 13. Article 13 has already assured freedom of speech and expression and the right to form association or unions. The above rights include the right of religious speech and expression and the right to form religious association or unions.

"Therefore, Article 19 is really not so much an article on religious freedom but an article on what I may call religious toleration. It is not so much the words "all persons are equally entitled to freedom of conscience and the right freely to profess, practise and propagate religion" that are important, what are important are the governing words with which the article begins, viz., "Subject to public order, morality and health."

"Hitherto it was thought in this country that anything in the name of religion must have the right to unrestricted practice and propagation. But we are now in the new Constitution restricting the right only to that right which is consistent with public order, morality and health. The full implications of this qualification are not easy to discover. Naturally they will grow with the growing social and moral conscience of the people. For instance, I do not know if for a considerable period of time the people of India will think that purdah is consistent with the health of the people. Similarly, there are many institutions of Hindu religion which the future conscience of the Hindu community will consider as inconsistent with morality.

"Sir, some discussion has taken place on the word 'propagate' After all, propagation is merely freedom of expression. I would like to point out that the word 'convert' is not there. Mass conversion was a part of the activities of the Christian Missionaries in this country and great objection has been taken by the people to that. Those who drafted this constitution have taken care to see that no unlimited right of conversion has been given. People have freedom of conscience and, if any man is converted voluntarily owing to freedom of conscience, then well and good. No restrictions can be placed against it. But if any attempt is made by one religious community or another to have mass conversions through undue influence either by money or by pressure or by other means, the State has every right to regulate such activity. Therefore, I submit to you that this article, as it is, is not so much an article ensuring freedom, but toleration for all, irrespective of the religious practice or profession. And this toleration is subject to public order, morality and health.

"Therefore, this article has been very carefully drafted and the exceptions and qualifications are as important as the right it confers. Therefore I think the article as it stands is entitled to our whole-hearted support" (pages 834-835, Draft Constitution—Constituent Assembly of India, 6th December 1948 Debates, Volume II)

*NB*—Article 13 of the Draft Constitution corresponds to Article 19 of the Constitution

12 Although the question relevant to our enquiry regarding religious freedom has probably not come up for decision before our High Courts and the Supreme Court of India, yet the interpretation of Article 25 of the Constitution came before the High Court of Bombay in a different context. And it may not be out of place to quote the following observation from their judgment in Civil Application No 880 and Miscellaneous Application No 212 of 1952, dated the 12th September 1952, reported in AIR. 1953, Bombay, page 242. Chagla, Chief Justice says —

"(4) It may be said that both Articles 25 and 26 deal with religious freedom, but, as I shall presently point out, religious freedom, as contemplated by our Constitution, is not unrestricted freedom. The religious freedom which has been safeguarded by the Constitution is religious freedom which must be envisaged in the context of a secular State. It is not every aspect of religion that has been safeguarded nor has the Constitution provided that every religious activity cannot be interfered with" (page 244)

"Article 25 protects religious freedom as far as individuals are concerned. The right is not only given to the citizens of India but to all persons, and the right is to profess, practise

and propagate religion But here again the right is not an unrestricted right It is a right subject to public order, morality and health, and further it permits the State to make any law regulating or restricting any economic, financial, political or other secular activity, although it may be associated with religious practice, and there is a further right given to the State and that is that the State can legislate for social welfare and reform even though in doing so it may interfere with the profession, practice and propagation of religion by an individual" (page 244)

13 In the same judgment, Justice Shah says—

"Article 25 has conferred upon the citizens and others residing within the State freedom to profess, practise and propagate religion That is subject to the legislative power of the State Legislature to legislate so as to regulate or restrict the activity of any person which may be associated with religious practices The right, therefore, which is conferred by Article 25 is not an absolute or unfettered right of freedom of professing or practising or propagating religion, but it is subject to legislation by the State limiting or regulating any activity, economic, financial, political or secular, associated with religious practice Similarly, that right is also subject to the social welfare and reform legislation of the State Therefore, Article 25, while conferring a right upon the citizens and others freely to profess, practise and propagate their religion, does not confer upon the citizens and others an unfettered right to carry on economic, financial, political or secular activities in association with religious practices, nor does it prevent the State from passing any legislation for purposes of social welfare and reforms, even though such legislation might directly or indirectly be inconsistent with the religious beliefs of some of the religious denominations" (page 252-A)

14 It may also be interesting to quote the following passages occurring in the judgment, dated the 16th March 1954, of the Supreme Court reported in AIR 1954 SC 282 —

"We may refer in this connection to a few American and Australian cases, all of which arose out of the activities of persons connected with the religious association known as 'Jehova's witnesses' This association of persons, loosely organised throughout Australia, United States of America and other countries, regard the literal interpretation of the Bible as fundamental to proper religious beliefs This belief in the supreme authority of the Bible colours many of their political ideas They refuse to take oath of allegiance to the king or other constituted human authority and even to show respect to the national flag, and they decry all wars between nations and all kinds of war activities

"In 1941, a company of 'Jehova's witnesses' incorporated in Australia commenced proclaiming and teaching matters which were prejudicial to war activities and the defence of the Commonwealth, and steps were taken against them under the National Security Regulations of the State. The legality of the action of the Government was questioned by means of a writ petition before the High Court and the High Court held that the action of the Government was justified and that S 116 which guaranteed freedom of religion under the Australian Constitution, was not in any way infringed by the National Security Regulation"—vide 67 C L R 116 at page 127 (H).

These were undoubtedly political activities though arising out of religious belief entertained by a particular community

15 "In such cases", as Latham C J pointed out, "the provision for protection of religion was not an absolute protection to be interpreted and applied independently of other provisions of the Constitution. These privileges must be reconciled with the right of the State to employ the sovereign power to ensure peace, security and orderly living without which constitutional guarantee of civil liberty would be a mockery" (pages 290-291 A I R., Supreme Court, 1954)

### CHAPTER III.—MISSIONARY ACTIVITIES IN MADHYA PRADESH SINCE INDEPENDENCE AS DISCLOSED BY ORAL AND DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE

The dawn of Independence saw India on the threshold of a new era. Widespread efforts at political, economic and social reforms were initiated. The nation's particular keenness on securing for all minorities including Christians a place of genuine honour and importance was immediately noticed in the Draft Constitution. Notwithstanding the unpleasant memories associated with the advent of the Western Christian Missionary activities in India and the methods used by foreigners under a foreign Government, notwithstanding that in the fight for Independence Christians as a whole had little or no share, apart from a man here or a man there, in spite of bitter memories of the partition of the country on the basis of religion and in spite of the pleadings of some of the powerful parties in the country, our rich and ancient culture and civilization found natural expression in the words of our Prime Minister, "As long as I am at the helm of affairs India will not become a Hindu State" (India's Minorities, page 21). A truly secular and democratic State was set up. In the land of about 350 millions, most of whom are Hindus by religion, a place of honour was assured to a minority of about 10 millions.

2 It is not without reason that the majority community in India today thinks that the minority sentiments should respond to the large-heartedness and liberal gesture of the framers of the Constitution to make India strong and progressive. The attitude of the minorities may not have been very helpful in the past, backdoor methods to sabotage the national movement may have been used, but the country expected that after Independence there would be perfect harmony with and trust in the majority. This hope was further fortified by the withdrawal by Indian Christians of their claim to have separate electorates in certain provinces. On the ground that reservation of seats implied lack of confidence in the majority community, representatives of the Indian Christians declared before the Constituent Assembly that they were not in favour of such reservations, and consequently on the 28th May, 1949 the Constituent Assembly abolished reservation of seats for all minorities except Harijans and Tribals. But within a short time of the passing of the Constitution reports of undesirable activities, chiefly at the instance of foreign Missionaries, started pouring in from different parts of India. On the other hand, it was urged on behalf of the Christian Community that the guarantees provided in the Constitution were not being followed by certain State Governments and that Christian Missionaries were being harassed in the exercise of their rights to propagate their religion. It is, therefore, our purpose to see what the facts are as disclosed in the oral and documentary evidence gathered by us.

3 We have mentioned elsewhere that a sudden fillip was given to Missionary activities after the passing of the Constitution.



We shall deal with the evidence which has been brought before us to indicate the extent of foreign assistance received by the various Missions

### Foreign Money

From January 1950 to June 1954 a sum of Rs 29 27 crores of rupees had been received in India The details are as below —

						Rs
U. S A	..	..	..	..		20,68,63,000
Canada	..	..		..	..	1,67,56,000
Belgium	..	..	.	..	..	6,47,000
Denmark				.	..	33,91,000
France	.	.			..	7,61,000
Germany	.	.				11,16,000
Norway	.	..		.	..	27,97,000
Sweden	..	.	..	..	..	64,41,000
Switzerland	..			.		15,77,000
Aid received from the non-sterling area						14,72,000
				Total	.	24,18,21,000
From sterling area U K.	.		4,83,89,000	}		5,09,18,000
Rest of the sterling area	..		25,29,000			
				Grand Total		29,27,39,000

This was the information supplied by Government of India as based on the figures compiled from the statistics maintained by the Reserve Bank

4 In the absence of appropriate and requisite material, it is not possible to ascertain the exact proportion of the amount that flows into Madhya Pradesh But one can broadly find the heads under which it is presumably expended

5 In our exploratory tour it was disclosed by Rev Lakia at Kusmī on the 10th June, 1954 at the morning session that in the year 1953 he had received Rs 60,000 for five provinces from the Lutheran World Federation at Geneva and that through the American Board of his Lutheran Mission he obtained Rs 90,000

from U S A to meet the expenses of one year's activity in the Suiguja area. Rev Ekka explained at Ambikapur on the 11th June 1954 that the sum of Rs 90,000 had reference to a special building programme. In the Chhindwara district we visited the Danielson High School and gathered that the expenditure of the school was Rs 33,000 per annum out of which Rs 9,613 was received from the Church and the rest from Government by way of grant and subsidy. At Achalpur we were informed that in the Leper Asylum at Kothara the total budget expenditure was met by a grant of Rs. 33,000 from the Mission and Rs 39,000 from the State Government and the income from agriculture. At Baihar, out of an expenditure of Rs 1,100 in connection with a school Rs 600 were the Mission's contribution. At Jabalpur the total expenditure of the Girls Training College in 1953 was approximately Rs 1,02,000 and the deficit amounting to somewhere between Rs 13,000 to Rs 15,000 was met by a donation received from the American Mission. The school had also received a donation for building up to Rs 4,00,000 between 1949—51 from the Methodist Mission.

6 Di E Emanuel, the Secretary of the Methodist Church of Southern Asia, stated that the Bishops in the Methodist Church were paid out of the Bishop's Fund which was made up of contributions received from many countries including America. St Paul's High School, Raipur, which is run by the American Evangelical Mission received a grant of Rs 16,000 to Rs 25,000 from the Government, and Rs 30,000 to Rs 35,000 from the Home Board of the Mission in America. Shri Biswas, Assistant Headmaster of the High School conducted by the Mennonite Mission, Dhamtari, stated that the amount of donation received from the Mission was Rs 12,000 to Rs 15,000 for the Church and that it was out of that amount that the school was run. The donation to the church comes from America.

7 At Bilaspur Rev Maqbul Masih (Bilaspur-2) is the Co-ordinator of the Adhik Jeevan Yojana, i.e., Abundant Life Programme, under which his Mission, viz. The Disciples of Christ, runs a farm and a primary school. The money required for financing the activities is received from America. Dr Donald T Rice (Sagar 10) informed us that the annual budget of the rural development programme (Jeevan Tara) was Rs 52,000 which came entirely from America. Rev Coleman (Sagar 12) works within a radius of 15 miles and the budget of his Mission is about a lakh, half of which is contributed by Americans. In the women's section at Takhatpur, Miss E Shreive is the treasurer. At Mungeli, the hospital receives a subsidy of Rs 4,800 from the Church of the Disciples of Christ in America.

8 At Amravati (Hartman, No. 1), we were told that the Mission gave its subsidy to the synod to the extent that was necessary to meet its deficit. In Yeotmal district Rev J C Nathar (No 13) the Pastor of the Church at Umri, told us that the central fund of

the Church had been getting some subsidy from the American Board for the expenses of the schools, hospital and evangelistic work. Rev. Vasant Samudre, (No. 25), the Pastor of the Church at Yeotmal of the Free Methodist Mission, said that the seminary in which he was working as a teacher received a grant from America. In Buldana district we learnt from Rev. S. J. Brajbal (No. 15) that 59 churches received subsidies from the Mission Fund in America. Rev. Raghuvel Chawhan (No. 2 Khamgaon), the Pastor of the Church at Alola, which runs a Mission school at Khamgaon informed us that a subsidy for the school was received from the Christian and Missionary Alliance Church and that the deficit which arose in connection with the activities of the Church amounting to Rs. 15,000 had been met through the subsidy received from the Mission.

9. Large amounts were received for evangelistic work in Surguja after it was thrown open for Missionary enterprise as a result of promulgation of the Constitution in January 1950. The Gossner Lutheran Mission opened a new Mission field in Surguja and employed a large number of preachers to go over the countryside for proselytization. The rate of proselytization from time to time is described in the issues of Gharbandhu from March 1952 to November 1953. In the year 1952 the United Lutheran Church Mission gave a grant of \$ 900 Dollars and in the year 1953, 2000 Dollars i.e. Rs. 9000 (Gharbandhu November 1952, page 13 and November 1953, page 15). The work was begun in Surguja by the National Missionary Society (Lutheran) in the summer of 1951. Rev. B. J. Kripadanam was posted to Ambikapur and the first congregation was gathered at Ganjadad when 59 persons were baptised. In January 1952 a special Surguja Board was set up under the auspices of the Federation of Evangelical Lutheran Churches in India. Dr. R. S. Oberly of the United Lutheran Church Mission was the treasurer and Rev. J. Lakra and Rev. C. J. Tinker and Dr. R. M. Dunkelberger were the other members. The United Lutheran Church Mission gave a grant of \$ 900 Dollars for the work of this body in 1952. Rev. Kripadanam reported that 12 Uraon congregations had been established with a baptised membership of 1,019. Three Gossner Pastors, eighteen paid evangelists, four Bible women were put on this work. To compete with them the Roman Catholics had also thrown into their work a large number of priests and their helpers. The entire expenses of the Surguja field were met by the U. L. C. M. Board. (Gharbandhu, November 1952 page 12).

10. At the meeting held on 6th and 7th of March 1953, at Parvatipuram in Madras State, it was announced that the number of new converts was 1,200 of both sexes and that there were 100 pracharaks and seven priests working with Rev. Kripadanam and that 25 acres of land had been purchased at Ambikapur. It was also announced that the U.L.C.M. of America had sanctioned a grant of Rs. 90,000 for the year 1953 (Gharbandhu, April 1953, page 16).

11 The scramble which arose as a result of competition between the Lutheran, Catholic and the Church of Christ Missions can well be described in the words of the report of Rev. C. J. Turkey, published in the December issue of Gharbandhu, 1952, page 2. As there has been some disagreement as to the party which advanced money to induce proselytization, we think it advisable to reproduce the original Hindi version here. It is as follows.—

“दूसरे दिन वहा रवाना होके चिरापडा गये जैसे पहले मे दर्शाया गया है कि वहा भेडिये घुस आये और चूद भेडो को तितर-बितर किया है, अर्थात् वहा के ५ घराने के स्वामियो को और एक प्रचारक को नकडुबकी बपतिस्मा दिया है. बीते महिने के दूर में अन्य भाइयो को यत्न से समझाये थे इसलिये सब दूसरे भाई बहिन थम गये है परन्तु जो अगुवे सरीखे थे उनको रुपये की लोभ दिखा कर डुबा दिये और तुरन्त तीस तीस रुपये तलप देना आरम्भ कर दिया अभी इन अगुओ के मन रुपये की मोह से बन्धा गया है. बडे परिश्रम के साथ उनको भी लौटाना है चर्च ऑफ खाइस्ट मिशन के भेडिये रूप कार्यकर्ताओ को अब पूरे बस्ती की जनता कि वे कैसे कपटी और छल्ली है अनुभव कर लिये है . . . . . रोमनो और शेफर वालो की ओर के ढोग एक प्रकार जनता के मन में जच गया है और उनका मन सत्य की ओर फेर लिया गया है परन्तु तौभी घमासान भिडन्त चल ही रहा है.”

The gist of it is that the other wolves, viz, competing Missions had entered the field and were scattering away (i.e. misleading) the Lambs. Some of the householders had been given Nakdubki (nominal baptism) but others who held out on account of greed had to be satisfied with immediate advance payment of Rs 30 each)

12 How this programme of mass proselytization was inspired and financed by foreigners would be clear from the following extract which purports to be the report of the Surguja Board presented in January 1954 at Rajmundiy. “As the informal meeting urged strongly that the Hill Tribe possibilities for which the Lutheran Church had the needed resources and personnel should be taken advantage of with the financial assistance from the West on the basis of “Partnership in Obedience”, the Lutheran National Missionary Society Council put the matter before Dr F. A. Schlotz, Chairman of the Lutheran World Federation Commission on World Missions. The appeal was backed by certain influential non-Indian Missionary leaders, notably by the Federation President Dr C. W. Oberdorfer, with the result that the Commission on Younger Churches and Orphaned Missions (C. Y. C. O. M.) sent a timely grant of 1,500 dollars which enabled the Lutheran N. M. S. to secure the services of the needed Uraon personnel. As C. Y. C. O. M. could only help orphaned Missions and churches and not initiate any new work, the Chairman of the L. W. F. Commission was negotiating with the various Mission Boards and finally the U. L. C. M. Board, under the leadership of Dr L. A. Gotwald, came forward to finance this work.” (The National Missionary Intelligencer, April 1954, pages 5-6)



17 In the world, the strength of Christians according to the various denominations is as below (p. 121, World Christian Hand-Book, 1952).—

Roman Catholics ..	.	.	423,000,000
			(R. C. Directory, 1952, p 593)
Lutherans	.	.	68,500,000
Presbyterian and Reformed	.	.	41,100,000
Baptists	.	.	40,000,000
Methodists	.	.	30,000,000
Anglicans	..	..	30,000,000

The Committee of the International Missionary Council met in 1948, at Oegstgeest in Netherlands, and considered an important paper on the subject of Communist policy and the Missionary movement and it resolved to extend and continue the orphaned Mission's fund for another five years (pp 94-95, World Christian Hand-book, 1952)

From what has been stated above it would be a fair inference to draw that the sums which were received in Surguja came from the I M C Fund.

18 It is also clear that the activity in the Surguja district is not unrelated to the cold war strategy. The Christian Missions are instructed to present Christianity to Hindu culture "at its points of need" as early as possible in view of the possibility of Communist infiltration from within and pressure from without (P 14, World Christian Handbook, 1952)

19 That foreign money has played a great part, from the very beginning of the Missionary enterprise in India, in securing proselytes from the poor classes, appears from the writings of Raja Ram Mohan Roy, who protested against exploitation "by a body of English gentlemen who were called Missionaries of the poor classes who are prompted by the desire of gain or any other motive" (Christian Proselytism in India, pages 87-88, by Parekh)

20 Richter in his History of Christian Missions at page 171 records that many people became Christians to ensure their own advancement or obtain a higher salary or any other advantage Dr. Pickett pays a tribute to the Christian Missions in these words

"Christian Missions have added to the wealth of India by the large sums of money which they imported from foreign lands The economic benefits have come to many participants in Christian mass movement . This is not a fact that need be hidden or discussed in whispers Considering how Jesus tried to meet the needs of the poor, healing diseases and other afflictions, feeding the hungry, etc." (Christian Mass Movement in India, pp. 139 and 140).

Dr Mott, however, appears to have taken a different view as he said, "Christ offered no inducement. He offered service and sacrifice" (p 240, Christian Missions Navajivan Press) When in 1936 Gandhiji made a remark that "Mammon had been sent to serve India and God has remained behind" Dr Mott replied that money was stored-up personality (Pages 235 and 245, Christian Missions)

21 Roland Allen at page 140 of *The Spontaneous Expansion of the Church*, says, "it is money, money everywhere, all the time, every thing depends upon money", and in his *Missionary Methods St. Paul's or Ours*, says at page 71 "it is sad to sit and watch a stream of Christian visitors calling upon a Missionary and to observe that in nearly every case the cause which brings them is money" Even the National Christian Council is largely paid from abroad (page 13, World Christian Handbook, 1952) Dr E Asirvatham in *Christianity in the Indian Crucible*, page 41, says, "one chief reason why Indian Christians in general still welcome foreign Missionaries is economy, it is an open secret that the Indian Church is not yet out of the swaddling clothes, so far as its economic support is concerned To give an extreme illustration only Rs 6,000 of the total income of Rs 1,12,500 of the National Christian Council of India . . . is from Indian sources and the rest comes from the Mission Board abroad"

22 We are told that the Missions are now integrated with the Churches but it is clear from the evidence that the purse strings are in the hands of the foreign Missionaries The headquarters of the Missions are stated to be in India and independent of foreign control, but there is a good number of foreign Missionaries on the managing bodies of the Churches As the work of the Missionaries professedly is evangelistic, the money received by them from abroad is utilised in engaging a large number of preachers and teachers-cum-preachers In our exploratory tour we were told that in the Surguja district the Lutheran Mission had 60 to 70 pracharaks, each getting Rs 40 per month Even in a small place like Basna, there were as many as 36 pracharaks working in three villages, each pracharak getting Rs 35 to Rs 40 per month In Bilaspur, Tularam (Bilaspur, 14) was a pracharak receiving Rs 82 per month According to him there were 4 pracharaks within a radius of 6 miles At Washim, Shri Dongardive told us that there were as many as 48 pracharaks operating in the area of the Nazarene Church, and that the number of foreign Missionaries was 24, including women, and that all the expense involved in the preaching tour had been met out of the Mission fund In Amravati district, there were 26 Missionaries with 12 Indian preachers whose pay varied from Rs 60 to Rs 90 each In Yeotmal, one of the pracharaks by name Moses David received Rs 157 per month John Gardia, who is a Christian Patel of village Jolkot, received as a preacher Rs 60 per month Solomon a teacher at Dhamtari, said that under the Mennonite Church there were 6 or 7 pracharaks who preached with the aid

of flannelgraph, pictures and dramas. It is thus indisputably clear that financial assistance from abroad has been expanded in far more liberal manner than even before the Constitution of India was promulgated, and that it is mainly with this help that Mission organisations are carrying on proselytisation amongst backward tribes, especially in areas freshly opened.

### Professionalism

23 We will now consider how far this money is being used for religious work only. It has been contended that most of the amount is utilised for creating a class of professional proselytisers, both foreign as well as Indian. We have not been able to get the figure of the salaries which the foreign Missionaries receive for their service in India. Only Rev Hartman (Amravati No 1) was pleased to declare that his salary was 63 dollars per month paid from Home, plus free quarters and vehicle allowance. One can have some idea of the scale of salaries of American Missionaries from the fact that in the American Evangelical and Reformed Church there are 28 Missionaries on the India roll and under the head of Missionary salaries and appurtenances the figure comes to 90 072 23 Dollars (American Evangelistic and Reformed Church Blue Book 1955, pages 56-60). They are supplied with well-furnished bungalows and they command resources in vehicles and other things. That the disparity between the scales of pay received by foreigners and Indians is great will be clear from the following observation occurring at page 101 of *Christianity and the Asian Revolution in India*. "all of them (Indians) are troubled by what are often glaring differences between the salaries and allowances given to foreign Missionaries and those received by national pastors, teachers, etc."

24 "Our evangelism in India" says Rev Ralla Ram (*Ways of Evangelism*, page 25) "rests so much on professionalism and wage earning. It has not become the natural expression of redeeming lives, the cart of Evangelism goes creaking along, propelled and pushed along by gigantic foreign resources. We have forgotten the carpenters' bench of the Master Himself and the tent-making trade of His servant Paul." Roland Allen, on page 146, *Spontaneous Expansion of the Church*, says "We created this paid professional Missionary class, not to support spontaneous Missionary zeal on the part of our fellow countrymen, but to take the place of it, in the same way we created a paid professional class of Mission agents among our converts not to support spontaneous expression of Missionary zeal, for we did not dream of it, but to take the place of it."

25 Thus it would appear that the foreign money which flows into the country goes not merely to maintain some educational and medical institutions, but is largely shared by professional proselytisers, foreign and indigenous.



26 The strength of the foreign Missionary personnel in India in 1954-55 as compared with the previous years was as follows.—

1940	5,417	In India including Pakistan
1947	5,040	In India including Pakistan (page 404 Directory of Churches and Missions, 1951)
1950	4,744	In India and Pakistan (Introduction <i>ibid</i> XV-page)
1951	4,377	In India only
1955	4,877	In India only (page 210 and Compiler's introduction, page vii, Christian Hand-Book of India, 1954-55)

There was an excess of 500 (men 304 and wives and women 196) The increased personnel has occurred in the smaller Missions most of which do not yet have any organised churches associated with them There has been a decrease in the older Missions and an increase in the newer ones (Compiler's Introduction, page vii *ibid*)

27 At the beginning of 1954, there were 16.8 per cent more educational, evangelical and other workers than were present in India in 1949 During 1937—1947 there was a 24.7 per cent reduction in the total of those citizens of the United Kingdom engaged in foreign Missionary work From 1947 to 1954 a further decrease of 12 per cent is noted (page 397, National Christian Council Review, September 1954)

According to official information gathered by us in Madhya Pradesh there are 480 foreigners working in the various Missions as follows:—

(1) Americans	..	..	..	236
(2) French	.		..	59
(3) British			..	54
(4) Swedish	.		..	32
(5) Dutch		.	..	29
(6) Germans	..		..	17
(7) Swiss		..	..	16
(8) Belgians	..	..	.	13
(9) Spanish	..		..	4
(10) Canadians	..	.	..	6
(11) Irish	.	..	..	3
(12) Scottish	.	..	..	2
(13) Brazilians	..	.	..	2
(14) Australian	..	..	.	1
(15) Argentine	..	..	..	1
(16) Finn	.	.	..	1
(17) Portuguese	..	..	..	1
(18) Italian	.	..	..	1
(19) Hungarian	..	..	..	1
(20) Danish	..	..	..	1
Total	..			<u>480</u>



## WAYS OF EVANGELISM

## Schools, Hospitals and Orphanages

28 The media through which the Gospel is propagated are primarily the schools, hospitals and orphanages

Richter, in his *History of Christian Missions*, page 317, says "A new day has dawned for India, the people clamour for education Shall Missions keep themselves to themselves and leave this development to itself or shall they enter the lists and make themselves masters of the movement and use it as an instrument in their task of Christianising the whole land?" At page 314 he declares, "Missions have neither a call nor a mandate to teach English literature, history, mathematics or natural science, the preaching of the Gospel to the heathen and the exercise of pastoral care over the relative churches is the head and front of all Missionary labour, and everything must be considered as pure waste which does not directly further this end" In the same breath he mentions orphanages, Y M C A, Medical Service and Mission to Lepers

29 Mr Mayhew at page 160 of "*Christianity and the Government of India*" states that in the shaping of Government policy on education there was a tendency to identify the interests of the Government and the Christian Missions In the Educational Despatch of Mr. Wood, known officially as the Education Charter of India (No 49, dated 19th July 1854), there was a clause in which it was said that with the growth of independent but aided educational institutions, the Government schools and colleges might be closed Before the Educational Commission of 1882 Dr Mackichan, Principal of Wilson College, Bombay, contended on the basis of the above clause that the Government colleges in Bombay and Poona should be closed down. Principal Wordsworth of the Elphinston College, Bombay, firmly replied in these words: "The place left vacant by the Government would in actual fact be occupied in this country by those powerful religious bodies whose primary objects are rather religious conversions than intellectual improvement" The Missionaries curiously contended that the Government by continuing its own institutions was violating religious neutrality Principal Wordsworth's reply was in terms equally emphatic "That it (the Government) should close institutions which it has deliberately established for the benefit of the people of this country, because certain number of teachers whose primary object is to detach the people of the country from their ancestral beliefs, think that these institutions are an impediment to the success of their own plans If India possessed the privilege of self-government, would it be possible even to discuss seriously such a proposal? If a strict interpretation of the principle of religious neutrality requires the withdrawal of Government from the direct management of schools and colleges, does it not much more require the withdrawal of all aid from institutions whose professed

object is the extinction of the religion of the country ?” (pages 234, 252, 253, 254 and 256, “Christian Proselytism in India” by Parekh)

30 In the Report of the World Conference of the International Missionary Council, entitled “The World Mission of the Church” held at Tambaram, in 1938, the importance of schools as a means of proselytization was stated in these unequivocal terms “Care should be taken to secure that evangelism has a central place in all medical and educational institutions” (page 38)

31 That this policy is literally followed in the schools would be clear from the article headed “स्कूल से फायदा at page 5 of “Gharbandhu”, January 1952 कलीशा को स्कूल से क्या फायदा है? स्कूल कलीशा के लिए राज्य-वृद्धि का काम करता है . . . . .” (what is the advantage of the school to the Church? Schools are the means for expansion of the kingdom)”

32 In the same strain one finds instructions in the “Catholic Dharmaka Piacharak”, page 60, as follows —

“स्कूल जाने का पहिला फल  
स्कूल में लोग भक्त ख्रिस्तान बन जाते हैं . . . . .”

(first good result of going to school—The school produces devout Christians)

In the copy of letter No FE-3/137, dated the 15th April 1937, from Lt-Col H W C Robson, OBE, Resident for the Eastern States, to the Secretary to His Excellency the Crown Representative, Simla, it is found that in spite of restrictions, reports had been officially received that special efforts were being made (by the Catholic Church) to win over young people, and that under the guise of education attempts were made to convert them to Christianity

33 In the report of the “Church of the Nazerene”, 1954 (page 20), the matter is emphatically stated as follows —

“Evangelism is our call We make no excuse nor ask for any reservation in this period Jesus has called us to preach the Gospel to every creature and we mean to do it in every phase of our work, be it educational, medical or distinctly evangelistic “Go, teach, win” is the command under which we work We cannot lessen this emphasis”

34 Along with the written statement sent on behalf of the Central India Baptist Mission, Khirkiya (Hoshangabad district), by Miss M L Meiry, is enclosed a copy of “The Conservative Baptist” of March 1954, in which instructions are contained as below —

“3 Missionaries and Board members alike are increasingly aware of the need both for a dynamic programme of direct evangelism and the use of medicine and education in the development of the work”

(The above issue of March 1954 came from 352, Willington Avenue, 14, U S A)

35 The importance of schools and hospitals in their bearing on evangelism is also stressed by W Harold Storm in “Whither Arabia”, page 93 According to him the avenues of approach

used in Arabia are three, viz., hospitals, schools and direct evangelistic work

36 Schools.—We shall first deal with the evidence bearing on schools

The statements made before us disclose that various subtle devices are employed to influence the minds of youngsters in schools. Ranchandha Tiwari (Khandwa, No 1), says that the Ballahi children are attracted to the Roman Catholic Church by the concession of free boarding and lodging, and indirectly their elders are influenced to attend the services in the Church. Shri C D Meghashyam (Khandwa, No 2), Pleader and President of the Nimai Harijan Sevak Sangh, found that when he opened schools for the Harijans of the Ballahi caste, the Christian Missionaries opened rival schools in the vicinity, holding out allurements of free books and other facilities. Babulal (Khandwa, No 3) was in the Roman Catholic School at Mhow and from his personal experience he stated that Ballahi students were given free boarding, lodging and books, and were called upon to attend the Christian prayers, whether they were Christians or not. All the three witnesses agreed in stating that the names of the boys after admission into the Roman Catholic School were changed. That the Lutheran Mission also indulges in this device is clear from page 5 of "Gharbandhu", March-April 1952, where the following occurs —

" . . . . . स्वराज्य हो जाने ने मरगुजा में धर्मप्रचार का द्वार खुल गया, . . . . . दो लड़के मरगुजा ने उचकेला लाये गये . . . . . उनका नाम पतरगर्धीर पावल रखा गया, . . . . . "

(Translation)

"With the advent of swaraj the gates for the preaching of the Gospel have been thrown open. Two boys were first brought to the Ichkela school for religious instruction. They were named Peter and Paul."

Babulal's own instance proved that to his original name "Walter" was added. Devi Pushpawati (Khandwa, No 5) was a Head Mistress in the Roman Catholic School, Khandwa, for 6 years and she also spoke about the change of the names of students. In the case of most of the Ballahi boys the Catholic Father who was the manager of the school used to sign as Guardian, and that gave him the opportunity to change the name and the religion of the boys. She cited the example of a boy whose name was Mukund to which was added the name "Nicholas", when he was admitted into the fifth class. The name of Vardhaman Ballahi (Khandwa, No 8), aged 18 years, was entered as Joseph in his application for admission to the matriculation examination. It was struck off when he protested. At Ambikapur Hiralal Uraon (Ambikapur, No 12) produced his primary certificate in which his name was entered as Johan Minz although he was a Hindu. According to Beohar

Rajendrasingh (Jabalpur, No 5), some such unconscionable methods had been used in the Normal School at Sijhora and they were exposed by Dr Elwin and Thakkar Bapa. There were some interpellations in the Madhya Pradesh Legislative Assembly with the result that the Normal School was taken over by Government.

37 In spite of the Conscience Clause in the Educational Manual and a clear provision in the Constitution of India, attempts are made to circumvent them by some device or other. Janardan Shankarlal, aged 14 (Jabalpur, No 3), was in the 7th and 8th class in the Christian Mission High School during the years 1953 and 1954 when the Bible was taught to all students, Christian or non-Christian, and they used to be tested the next day. Attendance used to be marked before the Bible period and the absence therefrom was treated as absence from the class. Vidyavati Gaikwad (Jabalpur, No 1) aged 16, was a student in the Johnson's Girls School from the primary class up to Matriculation in 1954, during which time the morning prayer was compulsory for all and it was a Christian prayer. The resident students had to go to Church on Sundays compulsorily for prayers. On the 15th of August 1954 a drama was staged in the school in celebration of the Independence Day. The four quarters of the world were represented by actors who brought four flags representing Pakistan, England, America and India. After some dialogue the Indian flag was hoisted. Then a holy person entered the stage proclaiming peace for the world and then followed a group of girls with a flag bearing the sign of the cross. That flag came to be hoisted on the top of all the flags. The Principal of the School explained that the drama was designed to promote friendship between India, England, America and Pakistan. This drama evoked some public criticism in the Nava-Bharat of Jabalpur, dated 17th August 1954. Miss Zilla Soule (Jabalpur, No 2), is the Principal of the Training College and she stated that the Bible classes were not compulsory even for Christian boys, nevertheless non-Christian girls attended it for the special reason that it was an Assembly hour during which the day's programme of the school was announced. The girls were attending the prayer in their own interest to hear the announcement. The same thing was said more or less, by Shri Robinson, Headmaster of the Christ Church High School (Jabalpur, No 6). F. M. P. Singh (Jabalpur, No 12), Headmaster, Christian High School Jabalpur admitted that before September 1954 teaching of Bible and Christian prayer were compulsory.

38 Mahadeo Tukaram (Yeotmal, No 18), is a student of the Mission High School, Darwaha, and he stated that all the students have to join prayers and on Sundays hear the Sacred Scriptures being read. Sumitra Gaikwad (Yeotmal, No 19), is a teacher in the India Free Methodist Conference School at Umri. According to her, Hindu boys attend the prayers as they are addressed to God so that He may help the boys in their study and promote the welfare of the country. Nandlal Dube, Teacher, Mission High School, Chotapara (Bilaspur, No 13), said that after attendance was

marked, prayers were offered and a student who was absent was fined one anna. Subhaktibai Fernandes (Buldana, No. 2) is a school mistress who brought to our notice the absence of forms which are specifically designed to give effect to the express provision of the Constitution in regard to the attendance at religious prayers in schools.

### HOSPITALS

39 Shrimati Yengad (Washim, No. 1), is the nurse in the Mission Hospital at Washim run by the Nazarene Mission. She stated that an Indian lady preacher offered prayers, imploring divine aid for the recovery of the in-door patient. She herself believed in preaching and healing. The lady is Satjabai Yengad, who is described as a splendid Bible woman, who daily gives her witness from room to room. So also Sampat Shinde who daily comes to the hospital to give his witness (Report of Church of the Nazarene Mission, 1954, page 20). Hanumanth Bhatkhande (Washim, No. 5) is an Advocate of the High Court, who complained that while his wife was in the hospital at Washim a nurse by name Shrimati Sathe tried to influence her to become a Christian, using the name of Rev. Narayan Waman Tilak. One Zongaji complained to Shri Narayan Kale (Washim, No. 8), that he had been asked to pay either Rs. 35 or hand over his child who had been in the hospital for treatment, for being brought up as a Christian. Similar complaints were laid before us by Yeshwant Mahai (Washim, No. 10), Shrimati Nalimbai Sathe (Washim, No. 11) and Pramilabai Dabu (Washim, No. 14).

40 At Raipur, one Jharidat (Raipur, No. 2), who had been in the Leper Asylum, Raipur, for 21 years, reverted to Hinduism after the asylum had been taken over by the Government. He had become a Christian during the time that it was under the management of the Mission. Along with him about 100 patients gave up Christianity, but a few remained Christian. Hardeo, Mojuram and Mst. Hiro [Nos. 3, 3 (a) and 3 (b) (Raipur)] said that they had become Christians because the hospital was under the management of Christians and reverted to Hinduism voluntarily as the Medical Officer was a Hindu.

41 The doctrine that sickness is cured by faith in Christ is propagated in the market place, as stated by Jatashankar Sharma (Raipur, No. 6). Dr. Samuel, preaching in the market at Mahasamund, cited the instance of a child which was brought to the hospital for treatment and was saved. As his father had already lost his two sons, he developed faith in Jesus and became a Christian. Tarachand (Raipur, No. 17) was told in the Mission Hospital that his wife would be cured by faith in Jesus, and she had to offer Christian prayers. Similarly, the wife of Narsinghdas (Raipur, No. 19), who was in the Jagdeeshpur Hospital, was asked to attend Christian prayers. When Harnamji (Raipur, No. 15) visited the Evangelical Hospital, Tilda, to see his mother who was an in-door patient he found the pictures of Krishna and Gopis bathing in the Jumna, and Rama going to the forest, and he was told that they

were of bad character. One Bideshi (Raipur, No 27) complained of pressure being brought to bear upon him by one Tulsī Bahu to become a Hindu but he admitted that he had affixed his thumb-impression to the general application made by a large number of in-patients for being reconverted to Hinduism, and added that he changed his mind before the performance of the Shuddhi ceremony. Dr Mukerjee, the Leprosy Specialist of the Leper Asylum, Raipur (Raipur, No 29), produced the official register to show that all those who reverted to Hinduism did so of their own free-will and choice. The original application bore the thumb-impression of Bideshi against serial number 14 along with others who reverted to Hinduism in December 1948. Bideshi continued to be an inmate of the Asylum until 22nd December 1949, when he left it of his own accord. The official file contained a letter, dated the 21st June 1949, from Mr Essabaggers bearing the names of all Christian inmates in the hospital. Bideshi's name was not there, as he had ceased to be a Christian. In the hospital, there were some Christian lepers who did not choose to revert to Hinduism.

42 Turning to the reports of the "Mission to Lepers", one comes across cases of conversions occurring every year in the Leper Asylums. The Chandkhuri Leprosy Hospital and Homes celebrated its 50th jubilee in 1947. On the last page of the printed report, we find the following figures of Baptisms —

1898 to 1905	.	..	493
1906 to 1912	.		263
1913 to 1934			1,401
1935 to 1947			395
Total			<hr/> 2,552 <hr/>

The number evidently includes leper children as well, the majority of whom are shown as non-infectious in the report.

Rev T H Major, Superintendent, Kothara Leprosy Hospital, Achalpur, in his written statement stated that, in his hospital, out of the total strength of 299 patients, 290 were on the Government roll and only 9 on the mission roll. Out of these, no less than 100 patients were Christians although only a few were Christians at the time of admission. He has supplied the following statement of conversions yearwise since 1947 when he took charge of the Asylum —

Year	Conver-	Year	Conver-
	sion		sion
(1)	(2)	(1)	(2)
1947	24	1951	11
1948	4	1952	21
1949	53	1953	3
1950	14	1954	24
Total		..	<hr/> 154 <hr/>



During the period of eight years 154 patients were converted to Christianity. Evidently, they are out of those who were on the Government roll and on the maintenance of whom Government was contributing Rs 26,000 a year as grant-in-aid.

43 Rev Major produced a letter from the Council of the "Mission to Lepers", in London, and stated that he had to work within the framework of that letter. The salient parts thereof are as follows —

"The object of the Society is to provide for the spiritual instruction and temporal relief of the lepers and their children in India. While doing this, it has also to safeguard the liberty of the patients for it would be grievous to the Mission for its service to be the occasion of any compulsion in religious matters."

44 In the report of 1952-53 in respect of Madhya Pradesh at Champa, there were 12 patients who had been baptised. Among them were a youth named Chandus and others were women. The remark occurs that such baptisms were not isolated experiences but were the outcome of the faithful witness of the Church in the Home such as Evangelistic Meetings, Special Passion Tide and Easter Meetings, the Annual Bible Courses and Sunday Schools. At Shantipur also during that year, 25 people were baptised and others had expressed a desire for baptism. There is a remark that spiritual seed has been sown and watered but God alone could give the increase.

45 Shri Manikrao Hanote (Amravati, No 4), who has been in the service of the Leper Home, Kothara, since he was cured in 1954, stated that at Sunday prayers about 200 people attend without any compulsion and added that from 1947 there were 60 conversions.

46 Mahant Nayandas, M.L.A., and Secretary, Akhil Bharatiya Satnam Sabha (Raipur, No 23), stated from his personal knowledge how pressure was brought to bear on the patients in hospitals to get converted to Christianity. He cited an instance of one Kejha of Modpa, Bilaspur district, who was an in-door patient at Mungeli. He was asked to become a Christian, if he wanted to be cured. Similarly, Bodhan Satnam of Dhawia Bata, an in-door patient of Bilaspur hospital, was pressed to become a Christian and was actually converted. One year after he was out of the hospital, he approached Mahant Nayandas to take him back in his own Satnam fold and he was reconverted. Mahant Nayandas was himself a patient in the Tilda hospital and was an eye witness to all the Christian preachings that went on in the hospital. Dr Pillay (Sagar, No 1), said that it was the duty of a good doctor to present Christ to a patient in a Mission Hospital, and Rev Raman (Sagar, No 2), added that in illness a patient is in a most receptive

mood Miss Bijnor, (Sagar, No 5), stated that a Christian-doctor is in duty bound not only to heal the patients bodily but also be a witness for Christ

47 Now as to Christian Orphanages, they are undoubtedly being run to multiply the population of Christians. A large number of such orphans were gathered into the Christian fold during famine, natural calamities like the floods and the earthquakes. There can thus be little doubt that special emphasis on spreading Christianity is given in dealing with young immature minds or those temporarily disabled by physical ailments. No wonder that the largest number of converts are from such backward classes living in areas where due to various causes only Mission schools and hospitals exist. Most conversions have been doubtless insincere admittedly brought about in expectation of social service benefits and other material considerations

48 Among the various devices employed for proselytization one is *money-lending* carried on by the Roman Catholic Missions. In our exploratory tour there was everywhere the complaint in the districts of Surguja and Raigarh that the Roman Catholic Missionaries advanced loans on condition that the debtor agreed to chop off his top-knot (choti) and that those who did not accept the condition had to repay the loan with interest. In Mandla district also, the loans were advanced to the aborigines as stated by Rambharose Agrawal, (Mandla, No 1) Rev Diliya, (Mandla, No 2) who is a Missionary of the Gondwana Mission operating in the Mandla district and whose main work is evangelistic received complaints of this nature. He, however, thought that it might be just to help poor men as the Roman Catholics reached the places where Government help was not available. He emphatically declared that his own Mission never adopted such methods of conversion. Rev A I George, (Mandla, No 5), is the Secretary of the Patpara Mission. People often approached him for conversion to Christianity with the expectation of financial help. Shri Umeshdutta Pathak, (Mandla No 10), stated that people were converted by offering inducements of loan and help in litigation. Beohar Rajendrasingh, (Jabalpur, No 5), was a proprietor of the Malguzari village in Mandla district inhabited mostly by Gonds. He was President of Mahakoshal branch of the All-India Harijan Sevak Sangh as also the Vice-President of Vanvasi Seva Mandal at Mandla. He claims to have a direct knowledge of moneylending being one of the means of inducing conversions. Daduram (Jabalpur, No 7) is a Gond agriculturist who stated that he had been induced by Hansa, Peter and Mohan to become a Christian so that he might get some monetary benefit but as he failed to get it even after conversion he reverted to Hinduism. Shri Shankar Datta Shastri of Dharampur (Raigarh, No 1) had owned as Raj Purohit two Mafi villages inhabited by Uraons and other Adiwasis. To his knowledge one Balchit Uraon went to Ludeg and got a loan from the Padri and became converted.

(Primitation)

50 Referring to Chhota Nagpur, Rev. Puckett says—  
 'Roman Catholic Mission' are aggressively seeking to win converts from Protestant Christian groups and are accused of offering financial inducements through Co-operative Societies loans, employments, fee or reduced tuition in schools, financing of court case, etc.  
 The Roman Catholic and Anglicans (S. P. C. Mission) in these villages were plotting to discover the occasion for leaving the Lutheran church and joining one of the other former Lutherans. So far as we could discover the occasion were (1) Discipline by the Church or by the tribal brotherhood (2) (In case of Roman Catholics only) financial assistance (Pages 325-326 Christian Mass Movement in India 1933)

In the Udaipur State there was a ban on the entry of Missionaries. The then Ruler of the State was a minor and the State was being managed by the Political Department. On receipt of reports in June 1935, that some 6000 persons had offered themselves for instruction with a view to baptism Col Meek had an interview with the Bishop of Ranchi. When Col Meek enquired

whether any inducement had been offered, such as advancement of loans, the Bishop replied that the Mission advanced loans to Christians in need of money and that the knowledge of this fact might certainly be an inducement for others to embrace Christianity. Then a formal enquiry came to be made, through Col Murphy, who visited 15 villages in the Udaipur State. He found that the alleged spontaneity of people in the Udaipur State to embrace Christianity was entirely false, and he concluded that the people had been actuated "by one idea and one idea only, that being the receipt of money from the Mission on loan". He further found that information had been disseminated throughout the State that loans would be readily obtained in Mission Station at Tapkara on a note of hand without any security, on condition that they should have their top-knot cut off. Some of the people who had received loans were minors and casual labourers. It also appeared that when one member of a family had taken a loan, all the other members of that family were entered in the book as potential converts. The rate of interest charged was 10 per cent and in a large number of cases examined, one year's interest was deducted in advance. On being questioned, the people without any hesitation, said that their only purpose in going to the Mission had been to get money, and all said that without the lure of money none would have sought to become Christian. In a letter which the Bishop of Ranchi wrote to Col Murphy he tried to explain it in this way

"The taking of loans is not the motive of conversion, but it is in the eyes of aboriginals a sign of adherence and a pledge of earnestness and sincerity"

51 The result of the enquiry was that Col Meek imposed severe restrictions on the activities of Missionaries, and his action was confirmed by the Government of India (letter No F/751-JMS-35, dated the 9th October 1936). In spite of these restrictions there were reports received officially that devious efforts were being made to win over young people under the guise of educating them in schools (vide letter No FE/3/137, dated 15th April 1937). A similar situation arose in Raigarh State while Dr Baldeoprasad Mishra, D Litt., was the Diwan of that State between 1930 and 1940. In 1936 the Bishop of Ranchi requested him for a site in that State for erecting a Church declaring that there were 4000 Christians in the State and that he was responsible for saving their souls. On an enquiry made by Dr Mishra, it transpired that the Roman Catholic Mission had made arrangements for lending money to people in the Raigarh State on condition that the debtors agreed to have their top-knot chopped off. When he inspected the registers he found that not only the name of the head of the family who had borrowed money but the names of the family members were also entered as debtors. When Dr Mishra reported to the Bishop of Ranchi that there was no Christian in the Raigarh State he received the answer that the names of the debtors were entered as Christians in the register because it was the Christian Co-operative Society which had lent

the money. Thereafter an Anti-Conversion Act came to be passed in the Raigarh State.

51. This device of using money-lending to serve religious purpose was fully established in Raigarh. Under "Raigarh, Nos. 6, 11 to 25", who filed the receipts, they had obtained from the Mission authorities at Tatanagar repayment of their loans. The story related by them was of the same nature as indicated above.

#### Other Allurements

52. There is a body of evidence to show that conversions were induced on the promise of gift of suit, plough, bullocks and even milk powder received from abroad. It is unnecessary to recapitulate that evidence in view of the admission made by John Laksh of Pithora, at Dhorpur on 12th June 1954 as follows:—

"I saw in them some sort of willingness to become Christians to improve their lot. They saw what facilities there were for education, medical help, which were given by Christians, paaky bank, etc. I told a good many people that the Christians were happy in other places. I told that we look to the material welfare of the men and not only of their souls. . . . The first thing is to make them of our faith. Then we open schools and afford other facilities. . . . We have got a Mutual Aid Society to advance money. In all the centres at Jasampur there is Mutual Aid Society. . . . Only Christians are members. . . . We have got several committees in foreign countries from which amount is collected. This is received here and spent by the Bishop. . . . If parents embrace Christianity their minor children are also baptised."

A Lutheran Pastor who testified also said, "I tell people that if they want to secure our improvement they are welcome to Christianity."

The allurements of material benefits are also held out in other places as was brought to our notice in Amravati, Yeotmal, Khamgaon and Bilaspur.

#### Engagement as Pracharaks

53. In the explanatory notes it was brought to our notice that one of the inducements was to engage new converts as pracharaks on Rs. 40 per month. In the Surguja district there were 60 to 70 pracharaks. Shri Gaurant Tayade, (Amravati, No. 9), who belongs to the Mahar community stated that people who are not competent enough even to earn Rs. 20 per month received as pracharak a salary up to Rs. 100 per month. Rev. Grubb, (Amravati, No. 2), admitted that he had 12 pracharaks working under him and that the scale of their pay varied from Rs. 60 to Rs. 90 per month. Sonbaji, (Yeotmal, No. 6), a Christian preacher converted from the Mahar caste, was receiving Rs. 45 per month as a preacher. Silas Zingre, (Yeotmal, No. 10), another Christian preacher, was getting Rs. 60 per month and he has converted 100 persons. The pay of pastor J. C. Nathar, (Yeotmal, No. 15), of the Church at Umri was Rs. 98 per month. As a preacher in the hospital at Umri he had 15 conversion to his credit. Shri Moses David, (Yeotmal, No. 22), gets a

salary of Rs 157 per month Since 1947 he converted 200 persons to Christianity Shri Laxman Bhatkar, (Buldana, No 5), is M P He belongs to the caste of Mahar and has been a social worker for 35 years, and is now conducting a hostel known as Chokhamela Hostel He had also been M L A from 1938 to 1942 From his personal knowledge he stated that almost cent per cent of Christian converts in Berar were drawn from the Harijan caste The Harijans who are poor and ignorant become Christians if they are offered the post of a preacher or teacher Hiralal Pagare, (Buldana, No 6), is a pastor who gets Rs 85 per month, so also Rev Gophane, (Buldana, No 7), who gets Rs 60 per month and Luther Manmothe, (Buldana, No 11), gets Rs 81 as a pastor in Mehkar Tularam, (Bilaspur, No 14), gets Rs 82 per month He said that 4 pracharaks work within a radius of 6 miles

### Use of the influence of Village Officers

55 Ishwarprasad Kotwal, (Mandla, No 6), is a Government village officer He was asked by the Father of Roman Catholic Church to distribute tracts among the villagers and bring them to Church on every Sunday He had to incur the displeasure of the Catholic Father as the people did not like to attend the Church Bhagwansingh, (Mandla, No 10), who is a Member of the Dindori Janpad Sabha, said that the Roman Catholic Mission got hold of the mukhiya of the village and used his influence in converting other people Ganjuram Uraon, (Raigarh, No 12), who is the Patel of Mudekela was approached by group of Christians professing to be directed by the Padiusaheb and asked him to call a meeting and advise the people to become Christians A similar statement was made by Shri Kashiprasad Mishra, (Raigarh, No 19) He is an ex-M L A and Chauhan of the Janpad Sabha, Udaipur This seems to be the usual practice which has come into vogue as a result of regular instructions issued by the Missions We find in the Hindi translation of the *Missions in Mid India*, published in 1938, the following instruction at pages 151-152 under head 6.

“यहाँ पर जो ईसाई पोलिस का काम करते हैं या जंगल अफसर हैं या स्कूलों में पाठक का काम करते हैं, अगर तीन दिन के लिये इन लोगों के लिये एक सभा लगाई जावे और अन्य धर्मियों का धर्मांतर का बोझा उनके कंधे पर रक्खा जाय तो बड़ी अच्छी बात होगी”.

(English Translation)

“It would be extremely good if the Christians in Police, Forest or Education Departments hold meetings for three days for converting people of other religions to Christianity”

In Gharbandhu of July 1953, page 16, we also find a suggestion on the same line It is as follows —

“अतः जो मसीह सरकारी डिपार्टमेंटों में काम करते हैं वे इस और जरा भी ध्यान नहीं देते क्या प्रभु उनको यह आज्ञा नहीं दी कि ‘मेरे साक्षी होओ’ . . . मसीह को प्रचार करना सब का कर्तव्य है”

(English Translation)

“Those Christians who are in Government service do not take any interest Did not the Lord command them also to be

his witnesses and to spread the Gospel to all people as their duty."

### Various Methods of propagating Christianity

In Burhanpur it came to the notice of the Education Department that the Christian Head Mistress had been unauthoritely teaching two books, viz., *Little Dutch Girl* and *Thumbline*, which were designed to encourage girl to go to the Church. She was a Member of the Original Sectional Church of Scotland.

56 There are various methods of approach, the people indicated in a book, entitled *Way of Evangelism*, issued by the National Christian Council of India, such as, Lay Visitation, Establishment of Ashram, Rural Service Fellowship Camp, Intensive Village Campaign, the Jatra, Lathi, Lecture in Sanskrit, Bible Study by Correspondence, the New paper, Book, Poster, Projected Pictures, the Flannel Graphs and the Drama. The way in which the preaching goes on will be clear from the following instance. Rev. Coleman, of the American Friends Mission at Amritsar, in his preaching round, attacked idol worship in rather offensive terms with the result that a complaint was made to the District Magistrate, Sagar, against him. He cited in justification that he was only reciting one of the ten commandments which had down the command, "Thou shalt not make unto thee a graven image" (Sagar, No. 12). The District Magistrate warned him to desist from indulging in objectionable propaganda. Mr. Albert A. Aronson, belonging to the Missionary Bands of the World, Rangoon, issued some pamphlets condemning idol worship. She also received a warning from the Deputy Commissioner Durg. K. C. Burdette of Surguja took out a procession in villages Chando, Jodhpur, Khutpara of tahsil Sumra, singing provocative song. He was prosecuted for offence under section 295-298 I.P.C. He tendered apology. There was a pamphlet entitled "Garudvan", containing inter alia the undermentioned song —

"नन्व प्रभु, यीशु प्रेम प्रचारक, ना जन के मित्रांगी रे।

नारे जगत में राज्य फैलाया, हर लो मय अधिकांगी रे।

हिन्दुस्त्ान के शुभ दिन आये, समके या उजांगी रे।

भारत गाये नाम यीशु त्त, लै लै हर जैलांगी रे।"

This pamphlet was banned by Notification No. 116-179 XX-D dated the 22nd January, 1955. Dramas are also performed in which idol worship is ridiculed, (Ujjhalsingh, Raipur, No. 20). A Christian preacher recited Kutans and exhibited lantern slides on the life of Jesus Christ and denounced Hindu Gods, (Tryambak Khanjode, Washim No. 6). The songs like "दगडे, धोडे, मोने, खे यानि देव मानिता कारे तुम्ही हकनाक तळमळिता" are common. At a fair held in Loni, Kunti the mother of Pandavas was denounced as an adulteress (Shri Narayanao Kale, Washim No. 8). Another preacher denounced Hindu Gods as stone Gods and dead Gods, (Yeshwant Idhole, Washim, No. 16). Ramchandra Bhedi, a student in the

M Sc Class, (Amravati, No 8), mentioned that Rama was described as a God who destroyed Ravan and was contrasted with Jesus who died for the wicked. He produced an extract from a book called "Bharatat Alele Preshit" in which it was written that the whole of India should be christianised. None of the Christian witnesses admitted the existence of this book but we have been able to obtain a copy of it. Rev Grubb, (Amravati, No 2), admitted that in his preaching he had referred to Krishna as one who killed his enemy and to Jesus as one who died to save his enemies. Balwant Ganesh Khaparde, (Amravati, No 10), retired Professor of Benaras Hindu University, heard Rev Pawar in July 1955 making a strong attack on Hindu religion in the Kirtan recited by him and emphasised the fact that Jesus Christ was a historical person. Dattatraya Govind Joshi, (Amravati, No 11), who played on the Tabla to the accompaniment of the songs sung by Rev Pawar, confirmed his statement and added that Rev Pawar ridiculed Krishna for teaching reverence for the cow.

57. The Christians have now adopted the practice of reciting Bhajans styling them as Yeshu bhajans and reciting the Bible calling it Yeshu Bhagwat, (Rev Maqbul Masih, Bilaspur, No 2). Referring to the passage "Ishya vashyam Idam sarvam" occurring in the Isha Vashya Upanishad, a preacher declared to the people that it meant that the whole world was going to be Christian (Gulabchand, Amravati, No 14). A Christian preacher addressed persons in the market place on what he called "Yeshu Bhagwat", and the lives of Rama and Krishna were attacked in a way offensive to the Hindus, (Mukund Chitale, Advocate, Bilaspur, No 5). At Mahasamund, Dr Samuel preached that salvation lay only through Jesus, and not through Rama whose wife was snatched away (Jatashankar Sharma, Raipur, No 6).

58. The expression occurring in Tulsidas's *Ramayan*, viz "Girjapujan" was interpreted to the people as "Girjaghar" i.e. a Church, (Mahant Vaishnaodas, Raipur, No 1). At Khamgaon, Rev Carner assumed the name of Shri Ladakebuwa alias L. R. Carner Saheb Khandeshkar and circulated leaflets inviting the public to attend his Kirtan in Marathi, to be recited like Gadage Maharaj and Tukdoji Maharaj on the subject of Jesus Christ in the Mission House. One such public notice was produced before us and is on our file, (Shri Narayanlal, Khamgaon, No 5). A preacher in a hospital at Tilda was heard telling the patients that Krishna, Rama, Shankar and Vishwamitra had gone for the darshan of Jesus Christ at his birth, (Harriramji, Raipur, No 15). In the pamphlets "Guru-pariksha, Rampariksha, Chandraleela and Sachha majhab konsa hai", there are very provocative attacks on Rama and Moham-mad. In Guru Pariksha, the following occurs.

"राम कृष्ण . . . मुक्तिदाता नहीं हो सकते, क्योंकि सब के सब . . . बुराईयो के वश में लिप्त थे" (पृष्ठ ४)

"वह (कृष्ण) चोर . . . था। उस ने कस के निरपराध घोड़ी का घान किया। ऐसे देवताओं पर आसरा रखना बड़ी मूर्खता है." (पृष्ठ ५).



"देवता मे एक आदित्य मक मा है मा मात क लीन है" (पृष्ठ ८).

"महा. . . . . माहि वा. . . . . आग मर मग और फिर नई की  
उठा. . . . .". (पृष्ठ ११)

"Sachha Majhab Komai Hai" the reference to Hajet Mohammad is in the c word.

"मुसलमन. . . मुसलमन महीनो वा मर मुसलमन महीनो" (पृष्ठ १)

"मुसलमन की १ (२) मीनो वा. . . . .". (पृष्ठ १०).

"महा माहि मी महीनो, मरमा और महीनो म महीनो वा. . . . ."  
(पृष्ठ ११).

"महा मर महीनो, माहि महीनो और महीनो महीनो महीनो महीनो" (पृष्ठ १२).

59 In the *Dharmopadesh* (Part II), other religion are referred to as false religion propounding worship of Satan. Catholics are asked not to go to Government schools or to schools where false religion is taught and that if the Government were to pass a law compelling Catholic boys to attend Government schools it would be repugnant to Divine Law. The protection of cows is also indicated on the ground that Christian God has given full power to man over the animal creation, as over the vegetable kingdom. There are also references against the Government on account of its secular character (pages 56, 57, 67 and 72). Some of the witnesses also stated that in the course of the preaching it was sought to be impressed that the Christian rule had made the people happy but that the present Government could do nothing for the Harijans, and that it was itself depending upon America for supply of wheat and monetary aid, (Jatashankar, Raipur, No 6 and Ramchandra Bhedi, Amravati, No 8)

60 A pamphlet published at Raipur entitled 'Satnam Panth' contained a veiled suggestion that the first Guru of Satnamis, viz., Ghasidas, had derived his inspiration to preach Satnam from a Christian preacher. As Ghasidas died in 1850 at the age of 80 (page 100, C. P. Gazetteer, 1870), it is very unlikely that he could have come in contact with the Missionaries.

The kind of instruction that the Missionaries appear to receive can be seen from the undermentioned extracts occurring in the *Evangelical Christian*, September 1955, on page 419, under the head "False God" — "Any one who has visited India knows the hold that religion has upon the people. They worship a million Gods, from inanimate sticks and stones to everything that lives and creeps on the earth—cows, monkeys, snakes, etc. Now a Brahmin priest has come out with a new religion which is the worship of Husband by Wives, etc., etc. India is surely the world's most striking illustration that religion can never bring peace to

the troubled heart of man or wash away the stain or sin that defiles every son and daughter of Adam	India's
trouble is religion, not the lack of it	Her tragedy
lies in her rejection of the One Person	It is Christ who
can meet her need, etc "	

61 Such virulent and sinister attacks on Hinduism are in no way a departure from the manner which characterised the Christian preaching in past, which Gandhiji referred to, particularly, Bishop Heber's famous line "where every prospect pleases and only man is vile".

So did Alexander Duff attack Hinduism in the Exeter Hall, London, in these polished words.

"Above the spiritual gloom of a gathering tempest relieved only by the lightening glance of the Almighty's indignation around a moral wilderness where all light dies and only death lives, underneath one vast catacomb of immortal souls perishing from lack of knowledge"

(*Christianity and the Government of India* by Arthur Mayhew page 175)

Similarly a journalist, Mr Harold Begbie, in a work "The Light of Asia", published by the Christian Literature Society for India, speaks of Hinduism as "A weltering chaos of terror, darkness and uncertainty. It is a religion without an apprehension of a moral evolution, without definite commandments, without a religious sanction in the sphere of morals, without a moral code, without a God, except a being which is a mixture of Bacchus, Don Juan and Dick Turpin. It is the most material and childish superstitious animalism that ever masqueraded as idealism, not another path to God but a pit of abomination, as far set from God as the mind of man can go" (page 157 *Is India Civilized?* by Sir John Woodroffe, Judge, High Court, Calcutta) Much more provoking are cases such as these. There were two cases of desecration of Hindu sacred places and the culprits were convicted (Criminal Case No 245/1953 and No 241/53 at Sirpur)

62 Can any right thinking man assert that such vile attacks on the religion of the majority community in India is part of Christian religion or is conducive to public order or morality? We are aware that top-ranking Mission authorities have themselves denied such attacks and have assured the Government that it is only the mistaken zeal of some fanatical individuals which is occasionally responsible for such outbursts. If such instances had been few or casual we would have accepted this excuse. But the voluminous oral and documentary evidence before us shows that attacks on Hindu religion, its gods and deities, are an important and integral plank of Christian propaganda, and are being indulged in, in a concerted manner deliberately in all parts of the

State and by all sorts of preachers and are occasionally sought to be justified by authoritative organisations as a mere explanation of one of the Commandments. The reason is not difficult to seek. It has been the case of Roman Catholics and other Missionaries since long that the Advaitis are not Hindus. In fact, it has been vehemently asserted that to regard Advaitis as Hindus is an instance of "Mass Conversions" by the Government and other communal bodies. In respect of Harijans, social injustice in their treatment by caste Hindus is considerably emphasised to propagate Christianity. These two classes are therefore considered to be the most gullible for propaganda against Hinduism. The resentment which such an attitude has created amongst certain Hindu organisations is therefore natural, although we do not appreciate the attempts made by some to retaliate by reviling Christianity or its tenets. Our purpose is merely to point out that in a predominantly Hindu country such a propaganda is not free from the problems of the maintenance of law and order. Considering the type of vilification going on in various parts of the State by ill-bred or fanatical preachers one is surprised to notice so few instances of actual breaches of peace. Perhaps the natural tolerance of the villagers, together with the vigilance of the authorities in charge of law and order, may be responsible for the paucity of such incidents. But it is indisputably clear that such propaganda has a tendency to disturb public order and the blame must be shared by those who start such attacks on the religion or religious beliefs of others with those who are provoked by them.

#### Mass Conversions

63 Has there been "Mass Conversions" in any part of the State? Let us first analyse what is really implied by conversion. The Christian point of view is that conversion is an act of God and is not a simple matter. Only such a person as can satisfy a priest that he has a disposition to be converted is admitted for instruction before Baptism, and only after due instruction is a person baptised or converted. There is no significance in Baptism or conversion without these precautions. Christian pastors will not, it is said, dare to baptise or convert without these precautions. The only motive that brings Christian Missionaries away from their homes, to strange lands, is the urge to carry out Christ's Command "Go ye into the whole world and teach all nations all that I have commanded you". According to this view, religion is an individual matter and is a man's free choice. Legally, nothing can be said against such conversions but the non-Christian plea is that these so-called conversions are brought about by force fraud or temptations of monetary and other gain, and are not conversions in the accepted meaning of the term. The evidence, which has been brought before us, shows that a very large majority of persons who change their religion and become Christians are not converted in the real sense of the term. If conversion is an individual act one would expect deep thought and study of the particular religion one wanted to embrace. But what we have found is groups of

illiterate Adivasis, with families and children getting their top-knots cut and being shown as Christians. Most of them do not know even the rudiments of the new religion. To cite a typical instance Beni Madhao, (Bilaspur, No 8), who was the son of a Malguzar, was unable to say with what book the Bible begins and with what it ends, and was also ignorant of Lord's Prayer. Some said that their sins were forgiven. The Government have supplied us with a list of persons recently converted in the Surguja district after the promulgation of the Constitution. A perusal thereof will show that about 4,000 Uraons were converted in two years. Persons of varying ages from 60 years to 1 year are shown as converts and the list includes women and children also. We have met many Uraons in the course of our tours and we were struck very much by their total absence of religious feeling. In the Christian literature itself, it is admitted that the vast majority of converts are but nominal Christians. At Khandwa, we had the opportunity of meeting a body of Ballahis and we could observe that except those who were in one way or another under the obligation or control of the Missionaries, the Ballahis were averse to the abandonment of their religion. The situation as described in the "Children of Hari" (1950) is that the great famine towards the end of the nineteenth century (1897—1900) facilitated Missionary access to them and several thousands joined the Roman Catholic and Methodist Churches. High hopes were entertained about converting the whole Ballahi caste, but there ensued disappointment. By 1931, it was found that scarcely 30 per cent of the Ballahis could be called Christian as many ceased to practise their religion and returned to Hinduism. "The great majority of Christian converts are Christians by name only and in religious belief and usage are practically Hindus. The main reason is that their motive is not religion, but mostly social and economic." "So far only such Ballahis have remained practising Christians either those who went through a long training in the Christian schools or are economically dependent on the Christian Missionary Institutions" (Pages 225, 226, 227). It is impossible to believe that they could have gone for religious instruction or that baptism was given after a period of probation. Most of the so-called pracharaks whom we met in the area were themselves thoroughly ignorant of their own religion and were no better than paid propagandists. We have reliable information that Mission organisations possess up-to-date records of Baptisms. Nothing would have been easier than to produce those records to show that only individuals, after a period of instruction, were baptised. It would not be unsafe to presume that the reluctance on the part of Roman Catholic Mission organisations to produce such evidence was in no small measure due to the fear of the Truth being out. On the other hand, we have been supplied with a complete list of more than 4,000 persons converted in the Surguja district after its "invasion", persons of varying ages and of entire families. As a rule, groups have been converted, and to find "individual conversion" has been an exception rather than the rule. We have come

across cases of individual conversions only of persons who are village leaders and they have invariably been followed by 'Mass Conversions' of the entire village community. We have not found it possible to accept the contention that the immediate material prosperity of these converted leaders bore causal relation to their conversions. It is true that material inducements are not offered in all cases directly but by a systematic parading of their wealth and power, grants of liberal loans, preferential treatment to Christians in hospitals and schools and various other methods of propaganda, a general impression is created in the minds of simple aboriginal that the only way to escape from poverty is to embrace Christianity. A person in dire need of material assistance will not hesitate to express before outsiders that the only motive for change of religion was "inner conviction". One is reminded of the familiar sight of poor debtors under the influence of various money-lenders admitting before Court and registration authorities receipt of amounts in excess of sums actually advanced, to make the whole transaction appear to be one of charging reasonable interest. How else can one explain the large numbers of quick and effortless return of such converts to their original faith? To say that certain organisations with the indirect support of Hindu official achieve such "Shuddhis" is to admit the duplicity of the aboriginal and his readiness to change faith for reason entirely unconnected with religion.

64. Rev. Maqbul Masih, (Bilaspur, No. 2) admitted that out of 100 conversions made by him half the number returned to their Satnami faith. Similar admissions have been made by witnesses in Berar, e.g., Mangalbhair, Evangelist (Amravati, No. 5) converted 200 but only 50 remained Christians. It is recorded in the report of the Nazarene Church of the year 1951 that at Anjan there is a Church "but no congregation because the adult members went back into Hinduism" (page 33). There is also an admission that in the previous year statistics at the India District Assembly showed a loss of members (page 19). There is thus, no doubt that illiterate Aborigines and Harijans are being converted *en masse* to Christianity in Backward and Scheduled areas not because of any genuine love for that religion but on account of material inducements and other temptations held out directly or indirectly by the various Mission organisations. These mass conversions were especially noticeable in the newly-opened territories of Raigarh, Dharamjaigarh and Surguja areas. As the conversions are from the aboriginals, Satnamis and Harijans an occasional attempt is made to show that Brahmins also have embraced Christianity. At Dharmi a man posed himself as a Brahmin convert stating that he was the son of Pandit Ramnarayan Dube (or Mishra). But on cross-examination he had to disclose that he had been a Bairagi but was then a Christian preacher paid by the Church.

#### DENATIONALISATION

65. An allegation which has been seriously made and more seriously denied concerns the denationalising and subversive trend

of Missionary propaganda Some evidence has been laid before us which may be considered Gandhiji said to the Missionaries that it is not unusual to find Christianity synonymous with denationalisation and Europeanisation (Christian Mission, page 160) The best evidence of denationalisation is found in a book written by an Indian entitled "Heritage of an Indian Christian" in which he seeks to find his heritage in Europe How the indoctrination of the denationalising spirit takes place will be clear from the under-mentioned instances which have been brought to our notice

66 In our exploratory tour in the Jashpur area there was a complaint that the preachers told the villagers that Jawahar Raj had come and there was no happiness, and they assured them that Jawahar's Raj would go and that the Christian Raj would come This was, however, denied by the Christians who were present there Nevertheless that statement receives some support from the written statement received by us from Khurkiya in Hoshangabad District that the expression "Jai Hind" was calculated to hurt the Missionaries and that they would wish it to be substituted by "Jai Yeshu" The idea of the unique Lordship of Christ is propagated in the rural areas by the exhibition of the film "King of Kings", which we had the pleasure of witnessing at Buldana The supremacy of the Christian flag over the National flag of India was also depicted in the drama which was staged in a school at Jabalpur

Chhiddi, cultivator, (Mandla, No 7), who used to receive two bottles of kerosene oil and Rs 13 per month to learn the tenets of Christian religion and induce others to do so, was asked not to greet others with the words "Rama Rama" but use the words "Jai Yeshu" In the letter published by Dr Elwin in the *Hindustan Times*, dated 14th June 1944, there occurs the mention of the fact that those, who came under the influence of the Missionaries, began to greet with words "Jai Yeshu" instead of "Jai Rama"

In the article published in *Gharbandhu*, Ranchi, June 1952, at page 12 under the heading "Nirala Rajya Aur Useke Karmachari" there occurs the undermentioned passage —

"आज हमारे सम्मुख सुरगुजा का विस्तृत राज्य है जिसे मसीह के साम्राज्य में मिलाना है."

(English translation)

"Today we have before us the Suiguja kingdom and we have to absorb it in the Empire of Christ".

In *Gharbandhu* of September 1953, page 13, there is a passage as follows —

"गत ७ महिने के अन्दर बपतिस्मा पाये हुओ की सख्या १९५३ जुलाई तक की १५७० से ज्यादा ही है प्रान्तीय प्रधान मंत्री मान्यवर आर एस शुक्ला की कुछ विरोधी आरोपण होते हुए भी प्रति माह धर्म के भूखे प्यासे जनता पवित्र बपतिस्मा के जरिये नया जन्म पा के प्रभु की मडली में.....";



Raigarh district was non-recognition of some of their *primary and secondary schools*.

We have been furnished a report by the State Government clarifying the position in respect of these schools. Although Mission primary schools in the Jashpur Sub-Division are run by the Lutheran Mission as well as the Roman Catholic, it is the latter that has a chain of primary schools throughout the Sub-Division in villages which have predominantly a Catholic population. The exact number of schools run by the Catholic Mission was never supplied to Government and at different times different information was given. The Mission authorities applied for recognition in 1951 and stated that they had 75 lower primary schools and 27 full-fledged primary schools but in their application made in July 1953 the number of full-fledged primary schools given was 32. In a more recent application, the Mission authorities have stated that they have one High School, 11 Middle Schools, 12 Primary Schools and 54 Feeder Schools. It appears that the number of Schools run by Mission authorities is not steady and is being decreased or increased according to their convenience. The Mission authorities claim that they started educational work in Jashpur area in 1910, but that it was only in 1944 that their two Middle Schools and 37 Primary Schools were recognized for the first time by the previous State administration. In his memorandum No F J/1-2/42, dated the 20th October 1943 the Political Agent, Chhattisgarh States, Raipur wrote to the Superintendent, Jashpur State, that 37 Upper Primary and Lower Primary Mission Schools and two Middle Schools were recognized in the first instance for a period of three years at the end of which the question would be further examined. Six conditions for recognition were imposed as follows —

That—

- (1) they are open to inspection by State authorities
- (2) the State is not required to give grant in aid
- (3) religious instruction is given only to those who desired
- (4) building of recognized schools should not at any time or under any circumstances be used for any other purpose without the express permission of the Director
- (5) the Mission should not open any new Feeder School or Classes under trees or in chapels or other buildings in the State without permission
- (6) School Transfer Certificate should be promptly given by the Mission authorities should any Candidate of a Mission desire to join a State school





for the purpose of religious propaganda. Considering that a complaint of this type has not been made from any other part of the State and that a very large number of institutions run by Christian Missions has been granted recognition by the State Government, we do not see any reason why the same Government should follow a different policy in respect of Jashpur only. We have been unable to find any basis for this charge.



## PART IV

### CHAPTER I.—CONCLUSIONS (FINDINGS)

On consideration of the material before us we arrive at the following conclusions of fact —

1 Since the Constitution of India came into force there has been an appreciable increase in the American personnel of the Missionary organisations operating in India. This increase is obviously due to the deliberate policy of the International Missionary Council to send evangelistic teams to areas of special opportunities opened to the Gospel by the Constitutional provision of religious freedom in some of the newly independent nations, equipped with new resources for mass evangelism through the press, film, radio and television (Pages 27 and 31 of the *Missionary Obligation of the Church*, 1952)

2 Enormous sums of foreign money flow into the country for Missionary work comprising educational, medical and evangelistic activities. It was out of such funds received from abroad that in Surguja the Lutherans and other proselytizing agencies were able to secure nearly 4,000 converts

3 Conversions are mostly brought about by undue influence, misrepresentation, etc., or in other words not by conviction but by various inducements offered for proselytization in various forms. Educational facilities such as free gifts of books and education are offered to secure the conversion of minors in the primary and secondary schools under the control of the Missions. Money-lending is one of the various forms adopted as a mild form of pressure to induce proselytization. This is found very prominently in the case of Roman Catholic Missions operating in the hill tracts of Surguja, Raigarh, Mandla, etc. Cases where coercion was reported to have been used are generally of those converts who wish other members of the family to join their Christian parents or to secure girls in marriage

4 Missions are in some places used to serve extra religious ends. In spite of assurances given by foreign and national Missionaries to authorities instances of indirect political activities were brought to the notice of the Committee

5 As conversion muddles the convert's sense of unity and solidarity with his society there is a danger of his loyalty to his country and State being undermined

6 A vile propaganda against the religion of the majority community is being systematically and deliberately carried on so as to create an apprehension of breach of public peace

7. Evangelization in India appears to be a part of the uniform world policy to revive Christendom for reestablishing Western supremacy and is not prompted by spiritual motives. The objective is apparently to create Christian minority pockets with a view to disrupt the solidarity of the non-Christian societies, and the mass conversions of a considerable section of Adivasis with this ulterior motive is fraught with danger to the security of the State

8. Schools, hospitals and orphanages are used as a means to facilitate proselytization

9. Tribals and Harijans are the special targets of aggressive evangelization for the reason that there is no adequate provision of hospitals, schools, orphanages and other social welfare services in the scheduled or specified areas

— 10. The Government of Madhya Pradesh, have throughout followed a policy of absolute neutrality and non-interference in matters concerning religion and allegations of discrimination against Christians and harassment of them by Government officials have not been established. Such allegations have been part of the old established policy of the Missions to overawe local authority and to carry on propaganda in foreign countries

## CHAPTER II—RECOMMENDATIONS, WITH REASONS

On the conclusions of facts reached by us we now proceed to deal with certain important considerations which arise out of them "on a review of the question from historical and other points of view", as a prelude to the framing of our recommendations

2 At the outset we wish to guard ourselves against being understood as making any reflections upon the character, conduct or ability of any individual. Our adverse comments, wherever they occur, are to be understood as referring to the Mission as an institution, national or international. It has been suggested that the Missionaries, who have nothing to hide or cover, would like to be told frankly if there is anything wrong about their activities that can be put right. We, therefore, wish to be as frank as possible so that when both parties are reasonable, there should be no cause for misunderstanding, but on the contrary, the way could be cleared for proper understanding, mutual confidence and common action.

### Tribute to the Missionaries

3 The contribution of Christian Missionaries to the shaping of Indian life in modern times has, indeed, been very impressive. Apart from the controversy on the point of proselytization, they merit high appreciation as pioneers in the fields of education and medical relief. The names of Rev. Hislop, Rev. Whitton, Rev. Robertson, Dr. Henderson, Dr. Martin, Rev. Dr. McFadyen and a host of others who served in our State as also in the country at large commanded great respect in their times. They established schools, colleges, hospitals, dispensaries, orphanages and institutions for the maimed and the handicapped. They elevated the neglected classes to high social positions and made them worthy of filling responsible posts in public services, and in all cases made them conscious of their dignity as men and inspired them with self-respect. They stimulated many religious and social reforms in the Hindu Society, and made it self-conscious. They have helped in the elevation of the status of women by giving the lead in female education. The Community Centres and Industrial Schools opened by them are, like their other institutions, the best of their kind. India will ever be grateful for the services rendered by them, no less than for the policy of religious neutrality generally pursued by the British Government, and for the eminent oriental scholars of Europe and America who brought to light the hidden treasures of the ancient Indian wisdom.

### Avenue of approach to the problem

4 Now that India is independent, the question is as to the point of view from which the problem before us should be examined. We think that the spirit which animates our representatives

of the various communities in India, including the Christians who participated in the deliberations of the Constituent Assembly affords us the best guide. Laying aside all their differences based upon the dogmas of their respective religions, they approached the national problems from a purely, rational point of view, and arrived at the unanimous conclusion that the national State of India should be a secular and a welfare State. The basis of the Constitution of India is, thus, Reason, not Faith, and it is from the point of view of Reason that we propose to approach the problem for a satisfactory solution.

### What is a Secular State?

5 What is a Secular State? In negative terms, we may say that it is one that is not a Theocratic State, viz., a state in which the Government is believed to be under the immediate direction of God and in which religion and politics are inextricably interwoven. In a Secular State, one may broadly say that there is no recognition of Dogma, everything that comes before the Government concerning the temporal interests of the citizens is open to full and free discussion. It does not mean, as is generally supposed, that the State is against any or all religions, or that it overlooks moral values. The Articles in the Constitution of India, which relate to a Secular State, are 25 to 29. According to Article 25, all persons are equally entitled to freedom of Conscience, and the right freely to profess, practise and propagate religion, subject to public order, morality and health. There can be a dispute only on the point of the interpretation of the expression "propagate any religion".

Suffice it to say here that the State will not allow its citizens to do whatever they please in the name and under the guise of religion. Article 25 itself specifies the limits within which religious freedom can be exercised.

### Past history of persecution in the name of religion

6 The idea of a secular State emerged after centuries of experience in human history. While our Constitution was founded on the liberal principles evolved in Europe, it was not blind to the red signal of the history of Christian countries in which indescribable acts of cruelty were perpetrated in the name of religion. It has been recently calculated that the number of men who lost their lives in the Papal persecutions of heretics, the Inquisition, the Christian religious wars, etc., is much more than 10,000,000 (page 293, *The Riddle of the Universe*, Sixth Impression, 1950, Thinkers' Library). They could be justified only in the words of Shelley: "the word of God has fenced about all crimes with Holiness". The American Constitution, which was the first in modern times to create a secular State, had to take into account the previous blood-stained history of the Christian Church. Jefferson, who drafted the Declaration of Independence of the U.S.A., set his face firmly against persecution.

and compulsion in the sphere of religion "Is uniformity attainable?", he asked, "Millions of innocent men, women and children, since the introduction of Christianity, have been burnt, tortured, fined, imprisoned, yet we have not advanced one inch towards uniformity. What has been the effect of coercion? To make one half of the world fools and the other half hypocrites." (Page 19 *The American Ideal* by A. Bryant) Jefferson was Vice-President once and President twice of the U.S.A. and declined that office the third time. The principle which he followed in the matter of religion is the one which underlies the Constitution of India. "As to myself", he said "my religious reading has long been confined to the moral branch of religion which is the same in all religions, while in that branch which consists of dogmas all differ, all have a different set. The former instructs us how to live well and worthily in society, the latter are made to interest our mind in the support of the teacher who inculcates them. Hence for one sermon on a moral subject you hear ten on the dogmas of the sect." (Pages 88, 89, *Jefferson, Living Thoughts Library* presented by John Dewey).

### Secular State does not imply Abandonment of Religion

7 Thus, our Constitution has in principle, followed the American model. In America, although the national policy affecting religion involved a separation of State from Church, she did not cease to be Christian. The American principle of religious liberty expressed very tersely is this: That the State should not forbid its citizens to do what their religion requires, nor require them to do what their religion forbids. The principle assumes of course that what a citizen's religion forbids or requires does not involve the violation of the fundamental human rights of those who hold different convictions from his own (*Religious Liberty* by M. Scate Bates, pages 90-91). It is clear that neither Hindus nor Muslims nor Christians nor Parsis cease to be Hindus, Muslims, Christians or Parsis because the State is secular. It only means that a secular State will not interfere with the articles of faith of any religion its modes of worship and such other matters of a strictly spiritual nature, unless the religious activities come in conflict with the fundamental rights of the citizen or the authority of the State founded on the Constitution.

### Respect for Jesus in India

8 It may be mentioned that there was none among the non-Christians who appeared before us or sent written statements who showed any lack of reverence for Jesus. A true copy of an article entitled "Christianity In India Under Fire" written by Donald F. Ebright, published in the *Christian Century*, Chicago, in its issue, dated 16th June, 1954, was produced before us. While he tells of "a mounting antagonism to Christian Activity in India which cannot be discounted", he emphasises the attitude of the Indian people towards Jesus in these words: "You are not in India long before you discover the great reverence for Jesus Christ".



9 At this stage we come face to face with controversial problems. We are indebted to an esteemed Missionary gentleman of Berar for bringing to our notice the Report of the World Conference of Missionaries held at Tambaram, Madras, in 1938, and to the representative of the Christian Council of India for favouring us with a copy of it. We have carefully perused it and other relevant publications, and it is in the light of the thoughts and activities recorded in them that we approach the problem to find a solution.

### The Church . Its Worldliness and Imperfections

10 As indicated above, India is in no way lacking in reverence for Jesus. But this reverence for Jesus does not attract Indians to the Church for the reason that it appears to the Indian mind that the Church does not truly reflect the spirit of the teachings of Jesus. This is admitted in the "Tambaram Report" itself, in these words: "As a human attempt to realise God's will it is incomplete and sinful; it shares in the limitations and imperfections of human nature, and because of its worldliness and divisions it is often a hindrance, sometimes even the greatest hindrance, to the coming of the Kingdom of God i.e. the rule of God over all. The worldliness of the Church and its failure to show Christian love as an actual fact, is its greatest weakness, and from it no Christian group is free and we should doubt whether the churches as they are do truly express the mind of Christ" (pages 27 and 29). "Often especially in countries where there are 'younger Churches' we hear Christianity and the Christian Church criticised as being importations from foreign lands or agents of Western Imperialism (*ibid*, page 30).

11 This outright confession was presumably made in answer to what the Christian intellectuals in India said about the Church in a book entitled "Rethinking Christianity in India" at page 114 viz., "The Church is no longer what is called the Body of Christ but it is the body of the national mind i.e. of the politicians who guide national policies". The same sentiment was expressed by Rev R. D. Immanuel in 1950 in these words: "The Churches and Archbishops and Bishops have not been the custodians of the Lord's Dharma but camp followers of worldly statesmen." (page 37 *The Influence of Hinduism on Indian Christians*, published by Leonard Theological College, Jabalpur, India). Even the writer in *Life* (Volume XX No. 3, February 6, 1956, the International Edition of the *Special Issue Christianity*, page 60) could not help admitting: "There is not yet any clear evidence of Christian revival. He significantly poses the question 'Is there some inadequacy in the message of the Churches?'"

12 Gandhiji expressed himself strongly against making people members of the Church. "If Jesus came to earth again" he said, "he would disown many things that are being done in the name

of Christianity It is not he who says Lord, Lord that is a Christian but he that doeth the will of the Lord" (page 165, Christian Missions Navajivan Press) These words were spoken in 1935.

### Missionary Movement of Mass Conversion, 1930—1940

13 The profound significance of Gandhiji's statement will not be clear without the knowledge of the political situation as it developed in the decade 1930—1940 since the Morley-Minto Reforms of 1909 which followed the agitation over the partition of Bengal. It was unfortunately discoloured by anarchical crimes Sir Andrew Fraser the Lt Governor of Bengal, wrote, in 1912 (3rd edition), a book entitled "Among Indian Rajahs and Ryots" in which he propounded the doctrine that the hope of India lay in the elevating and civilizing power of Christianity (p 275) and that "She ought to receive of our best" (p 276) He said, "all parts of India, so far as education and association with the West have directly affected life, feel the unrest which comes from intellectual awakening and the revival of national spirit" (p 278) and it seemed to him that "to give them civilization without Christianity is to withhold that to which our civilization owes all that is best in it and by which alone it can be kept pure and healthful" (p 279) . . . "to leave them without religion may make them a probable source of danger in the future history of the race" (page 279) In 1920 Gandhiji began his non-violent movement, taking his stand on the Geeta and rallying round him the masses including the rural population The Report of the Royal Commission on Agriculture in India was published in 1928 In that report there was a very significant statement, viz, "Throughout our investigation we have constantly been impressed with the thought that mere material improvement alone will not bring lasting benefit to the agricultural population" (page 58).

14 After Gandhiji launched his movement for Indian Independence the contest was given a religious turn by the Muslims with their demand for a separate independent State The Missionaries were straining their nerve to break up the solidarity of the Hindu society as will be shown in the sequel

15 The Report of the Simon Commission was published in 1929 It recommended the exclusion of the aboriginal areas from the purview of the newly constituted Government, apparently for the purpose of according to them special protection so as to facilitate their advance as quickly as possible to the level of the population as a whole The Missionaries came forward to take advantage of the provision with a scheme for proselytization of the rural and aboriginal people In response to the initiative of the Jerusalem Meeting of the International Missionary Council and the invitation of the National Christian Council of India, Dr Kenyan, L Butterfield (appointed by the International Missionary Council), visited rural India and focussed attention "on the vast area of human need and limitless spiritual possibilities", in the words of Dr J R Mott, who wrote the preface to his report called "The Christian Mission

in Rural India (1930)". That report referred to Gandhi's statement made at the outset of the campaign of civil disobedience, viz., "the future of India will be decided not in her cities but in her villages" (p. 42, Report), and also to the afore-said observation of the Royal Agricultural Commission made at page 58 of its report (Butterfield's Report, page 146). Dr. Butterfield called for co-operative and united work among the Missions and Mission institutions to make clear that there was a powerful Christian enterprise in India which was to win the sixty million outcasts and an equal number of unprivileged masses to a more abundant personal and social life. He suggested that the problem of the Indian villages should be laid before the American public and their cooperation enlisted. He pointed out the forces which had to be faced in these words: "the urge of the Christian enterprise to permeate and lead the ethical and spiritual advance in India will have to meet in India as elsewhere, the forces of secularism, of an exaggerated nationalism, perhaps of Communism, certainly of a material industrialism." As an offset he recommended that Christianity must present in an aggressive and effective fashion first Jesus Himself—the type of Christian individual embodying in some measure at least the spirit of Jesus and a Christian social order (Butterfield Report, pages 126-127).

16 The Round Table Conferences came to be held in 1930, 1931 and 1932. In that hectic period of excitement, the Laymen's Foreign Missions Enquiry Committee was appointed in America. It consisted of 15 distinguished citizens of America, presided over by Dr. Hocking. In their report was adumbrated the vision of a worldwide Church and world unity in civilization as Christianity was not Western but universally human (Rethinking Missions, page 8). It propounded that the original objective of the Mission was the conquest of the world by Christianity. It was a world benevolence conceived in terms of a world campaign—the universal claim of one historical fact—the Work of Christ (Page 35, *ibid*). It declared that for Christianity God is not far off but in all actions in ploughing, sowing, reaping, etc., (page 52), and that Christianity was prepared with a polytheistic faith to see God in varied aspects (page 53). In tones of imperialism it proclaimed "Missions must go on because concrete obligations have been assumed by our institutions to the peoples of the East which could not fairly be abandoned" (p. 5, *ibid*).

17 That report was presumably intended to supply the spiritual background to the Missionary adventure to present in an aggressive and effective fashion first Christ himself, etc., as had been recommended by Dr. Butterfield in his report.

#### Mass Conversion

18 The natural result of this united vigorous activity was that many mass conversions were effected. Dr. Pickett obtaining 25,000 dollars from the Rockefeller Foundation and 10,000 dollars from Dr. Mott, carried out a survey and published his report entitled

Christian Mass Movement in India, in 1933 (Gharbandhu 1931, July, page 104) Dr. Mott wrote a foreword to it. In a conversation with Gandhiji in which he described his work of mass conversion as a work on behalf of the oppressed, Gandhiji said, "I could understand the Muslim organisations doing this . but the Christian Mission claims to be a purely spiritual effort It hurt me to find the Christian bodies vying with the Muslims and the Sikhs in trying to add to the number of their fold It seemed to be an ugly performance and a travesty of religion" (P 420, Christian Proselytism in India by Parekh) The World Missionary Conference held at Tambaram in 1938 expressed itself deeply moved by "the cry of the multitudes for deliverance" and proclaimed "the great need for a true and living faith" (page 16, Tambaram Report) Missionary bodies, like the Church Missionary Society and the Salvation Army, rushed forward to save the souls of "the underprivileged millions", apparently with a view to make out a case for separate treatment of the Christian community As money began to pour into the country Gandhiji exclaimed "Mammon has been sent to serve India and God has remained behind" and Dr Mott said "money is stored up personality" (page 245, Christian Missions, Navajivan Press)

19 It is remarkable that in the Census of 1941, heads were counted communitywise, not on the basis of religion Mr Yeats, the Census Commissioner of India in his short note on Community (Census of India, Volume I, Chapter IV, page 29, Part I, Table) tried to explain the mystery On the calculations made by Shri S N Parashar (in his article published in Mahratta, February 16, 1946), in the light of that note, the actual increase in the Christian community was found to be 34,74,128 approximately, in the decade 1931—1941 (PP 448—450, Christian Proselytism in India, by M C Parekh)

In Hyderabad the increase in the Christian population was 141.6 per cent in the decade 1921—31 and 45.6 per cent in the decade 1931—41 (P 103 the Directory of Churches and Missions in India and Pakistan, 1951)

20 Another noteworthy feature was that in Burma the Karens like the Muslims set up a demand for a separate State and pressed their claim before the Round Table Conference. This move was evidently inspired by the Missionaries judging from the remark found in the Rethinking Missions at page 138 as follows :

"The Missionaries gave them education and through the translation of the Bible a written language. This remarkable achievement, *the giving of a nationality to the people*. . . . . has resulted in one embarrassment. The Missionaries are held responsible for breaking apart an important minority group

The Karens have today a *strong national society* which has sent a delegation to London to plead for a *Karen nation*." (Italics ours.)

21 Judging from the nature of the part taken by the Missionaries in the decade 1930—40 we are inclined to think that their activities were directed to segregate Christian Indians and to encourage them to demand special treatment. Their activities were thus clearly political.

22 One may think that this is but a history of a bygone age which has disappeared with the attainment of Independence by India in 1947. To think so is to misunderstand the situation.

23 Towards the end of the World War II the ecumenical movement designed to unify the Christians of the world under the aegis of a Universal Church became very vigorous. In 1945 the Commission on a Just and Durable Peace stressed as one of the four points of peace requiring Christian action the development of Christian unity on a world-wide basis and affirmed that the Christian forces of the world must "*become a well organised and militant minority*" (page 57, *World Christian Handbook*, 1952). When we asked for an explanation of the phrase "militant minority" the representative of the National Christian Council replied that it was an unfortunate phrase, but that it meant only "energetic efforts" (Italics ours).

24 It will be clear from what follows that the movement which was started in 1930, if not before, is now found flourishing in greater vigour, backed by much increased resources in men and money. It is a continuation of the same process on a wider scale. In *Christian Missions in Rural India* it was proposed to convert 600,000 villages to overcome the forces of secularism, of exaggerated nationalism, Communism and material industrialism (page 127). The ecumenical movement follows the same line. Rev McLeish, a trustee of the World Dominion Press which maintains a close liaison with the International Missionary Council (page 94, *World Christian Hand Book*, 1952), proposed the conversion of 600,000 villages in the course of 10 years (page 7, address at the Conference of the Fellowship of the International Missionary Council, June 1—3, 1948), and the objective of the ecumenical movement is to combat, besides Communism, "the Utopian expectations of the non-Christian religions" (page 28, *Elements of Ecumenism*), and discountenance the rapid development of modern technology and industry in Asia (Pages 93-94, *Christianity and Asian Revolution*).

25 It may be recalled that Dr Mott, who was in the vanguard of the Missionary activity in the decade 1930—40 and contributed 10,000 dollars to the survey of the mass movement (*Gharbandhu*,

July, 1931, page 104), carried out by Dr Pickett and wrote prefaces to the "Christian Mass Movement in India" and "the Christian Mission in Rural India" and also had discussions with Gandhiji on the subjects of mass movement and the use of money (which he contended was stored up personality), had then been regarded as a highly practical Missionary statesman (page 8, Elements of Ecumenism) When the World Council of Churches became a thoroughly organised structure in 1948 at Amsterdam he became its Honorary President. It may be recalled that Mr Dulles and Rev Lakra were also present at the Amsterdam Conference.

### Attitude and Activities of the Ecumenical Movement

26 The attitude of the World Council of Churches was greatly influenced by the experience the Missionaries had in the struggle with the rising tide of Indian nationalism. They found nationalism pervading, not only the Hindus as a community, but also the educated section of the Christian Indians. The policy of the ecumenical movement in regard to both of them is made clear in the two paragraphs which follow

"In spite of many efforts in many forms it cannot be pretended that Christianity has made any serious impact on Hindu learning or the Hindu upper and middle classes, its successes have been among the outcaste groups . . . the capacity of Hindu culture for absorbing other elements appears once again in the recommendations on religious teachings of the Radhakrishnan University Commission. The task of Christian Churches and Missions in Hindu India is . . . to seek ways of communication with Hindu culture at its *points of need*. *The time for this may be short in view of the possibility of Communist infiltration from within or pressure from without*" (italics ours)

"In the old Mission fields there are now Churches touched by new nationalisms, independent in temper and organisation and yet needing help from other Churches. The act of giving and receiving, within the context of the Church and the Churches . . . involves . . . a new understanding of the nature of the Church . . . the need of particular Churches *to be rooted in the soil and yet supra-national in their witness and obedience*" (page 14 and 29, World Christian Handbook, 1952) (Italics ours)

27 To come to grips with the adamant Hindu society, phrases such as "Hindu Nationalism", "Utopian expectations of non-Christian religions" came to be coined. The Hindu belief that all religions truly practised lead to the divine is ridiculed as a dogma (Page 136, Christianity and Asian Revolution). Hinduism was quite free from the secular idea of nationalism until it had to face the aggressive attacks of the Christian religion which came armed. There were declarations as that of Archbishop of Canterbury that Christianity was an Imperial religion (page 234, Imperialism by Hobson). To call the liberal attitude of the Hindu religion as a

dogma is tantamount to intolerance of toleration itself. The Hindu is denounced because like the Christians he does not believe that outside his own religion there is no salvation, but, as had been remarked by Rousseau, such a dogma is good only in a Theocratic Government (Chapter VIII, Social Contract). The action he proposed was "whoever dares to say outside the Church there is no salvation ought to be driven from the State unless the State is the Church and the Prince, the Pontiff. Such a dogma is good only in a Theocratic Government, in any other, it is fatal." Western Christianity unfortunately overlooks the fact that it seeks to foist upon the world the tribal God of Mount Sinai. Hinduism, like other far-Eastern religions, is not a tribal nationalistic religion. They are all international religions, except Shintoism for the reason that in none of them is the divine a God of the chosen people (page 402, *The Meeting of East and West*, Northrop).

28. Why should Christianity fight shy of the absorbing power of Hinduism? Christianity could hold its ground in India for centuries without any opposition. It was only after Western Christianity came armed with the Portuguese that there sprang up resistance to it. One fails to see why the introduction of St John's Gospel in University studies upsets the Universal Church. The Hindu has no objection to the Geeta or the Upanishads being read or studied by any one in the world. Presumably the fear that may be haunting Western Christianity is that if St John's Gospel is studied in Indian Universities it will have to face the True Jesus that will be brought to light.

29. It is remarkable that the Missionary appeal is addressed to those who live "in conditions of abject poverty and under oppressive system", to exploit the economic distress to which the country was reduced as the result of colonialism. Everett Cattell says: "Our point of contact, therefore, with any soul to whom we wish to give the Gospel, is first to find out what his particular sense of need may be and confront it with Christ. It may not at first even be expressed in spiritual terms. The late Paget Wilkes in his 'Dynamic of Service' points out that in a very fruitful service in Japan he almost never saw anyone converted through a sense of sin. That came later through gazing at the Saviour. But most men come with a need, social, physical, economic, or the like and an awakened faith that Christ could meet that need." (page 17, *Ways of Evangelism*). The distress of the poor looms large in the evidence before us as well as in the reports of the Tambaram and Willingen Conferences. This is a disruptive method followed by the Missionaries for the reason that Christianity was originally a religion of the proletariat and was in opposition to the favoured classes from the beginning and it, therefore, carries wherever it turns the seed of disruption (page 56, *Travel Diary of a Philosopher* by Count Keyserling). As a creed is a tool (in the words of Sir A Toynbee) it is used as a weapon to combat the creed of Communism as also to disrupt non-Christian societies.

30 Gandhi resented this approach to these classes and asked the Missionary to influence the minds of the intelligentsia, but he was told that the uneducated and the unsophisticated classes were more responsive to religious appeal as they were in real need of it. The real reason is to be found in the Census Report of 1881 (Bombay), where Mr Baines stated as follows —

“The greater receptivity of the member of the lower class is due to the emotional appeal which neither his intelligence nor his education disposes him to enlarge” (quoted at page 79, Census of India, 1891, Volume XI, Part I)

That places the converts entirely under the domination of the Missionary and wipes out his individuality altogether

31 We have already described how money flowed into the Surguja district to effect mass conversions after it was opened to Missionary work, pursuant to the liberal provisions of the Constitution of India. The mass conversions were made exactly in accordance with the instructions contained in the Missionary Obligation of the Church, 1952, published by the International Missionary Council. At page 27 it says, “In wide regions of the world the major problem is hunger in the present situation there are opportunities for the Church. Constitutional provisions of religious freedom within some of the newly independent nations new resources for mass evangelism through the press, film, radio and television” There is evidence before us that the people are called by some kind of public advertisement, offering inducements of loans and they are regarded as enquirers when they appear in response to the call. What species of spiritual impulse prompted the crowds to embrace Christianity en masse can well be imagined from what follows —

1st February 1952	10 families consisting of 69 members
3rd February 1952	28 families consisting of 144 members.
5th February 1952	18 families consisting of 85 members
10th February 1952	16 families consisting of 65 members

(Gharbandhu, May 1952, page 5) This is but an illustrative case

32 One wonders whether this is the way of diffusing spiritual illumination

### **Ecumenical Attitude towards Christian India**

33 As regards the Christian Indians, the question arose as to the meaning of “supra-national”, occurring in the passage cited above. This word was explained to us as having a spiritual significance. Rev Lakra, however, admitted that a Church, like the Church of England, could not be supra-national

34 There was also some obscurity about the word “obedience”. Before us it was divergently interpreted as “obedience to God” or to “Christ” or to “Church”. When funds were supplied to Rev Lakra, the expression “partnership in obedience” was explained as implying obedience to Christ’s command to spread the



Gospel (page 6, Gharbandhu, October 1951) 'The question, however, still remains, as to who would take proper action if the condition is broken That necessarily assumes some authority to call the delinquent to account The obedience would, therefore, be to that authority

35 It appears clear that in view of the fact that "the Indian Church lacks economic maturity" and even "the most highly organised National Christian Council . . . has to be largely paid from abroad" (page 13, World Christian Handbook, 1952), the control rests with the authority abroad

### Attempt to Alienate the Indian Christian Community from their Nation

36 There also arose the question as to the meaning of the phrase "rooted in the soil" This was interpreted by the International Missionary Conference, held at Willingen, in 1952, as meaning "related to the soil" The Church can only be "rooted in Christ" (page 9, The Missionary Obligation of the Church, 1952) Upon this interpretation it was emphasised that the task before the younger Churches was a formidable one, as they had to be "rooted in Christ", first before they could be "related to the soil" (page 271, Christianity and Asian Revolution) As one reads the Missionary literature one comes across phrases such as "colony of heaven", "in the country but not of the country", "historical community of the redeemed" All these smack of extra-territoriality which figured so prominently in Chinese Treaties It appears to us that the Missionary "strategy" (a word which recurs frequently) is to detach the Christian Indian from his nation It may well be a suspicion, but it is strengthened by certain views expressed by prominent persons Dr Pickett of North India speaking in the Assembly of the World Council of Churches in 1954, remarked that one of the reasons for the development of Church Unity was to obviate the danger of the growth of nationalism as the national churches were apt to reflect the spirit of political nationalism (page 544, National Christian Council Review, December 1954)

37. Rt. Rev J. E. L. Newbigin, who is the Chairman of a group of thinkers within the World Council of Churches (page 26 Elements of Ecumenism) laid stress on the fact that Christians were the chosen race in these words: "We cannot understand the New Testament without the Old . . . the central theme of that book is God choosing (election) a people to be His Own People . . . now (and this is the next great point) we who read it today in the Church read it as members of that People" (page 75, National Christian Council Review February 1954)

38. In an article "Christian Awake", it is propounded that "when there is a conflict of loyalty between Christ and country, the true Christian has necessarily to choose obedience to Christ" (page 158, National Christian Council Review April 1955) We have before us a pamphlet entitled: "For Christ and Country",

issued in America. We wonder whether the Americans would accept this interpretation of the duty of a Christian in America.

39 In India, there is the danger of such a conflict arising for the reason that in the report of the Commission on Christian Social Action, "competition" is preferred to "co-existence" (page 114, 1955 Blue Book Annual Reports of Officers and Boards of the Evangelical and Reformed Church). Here there is room for disagreement. Co-existence implies "live and let live", as also "let us live together", i.e., it may include co-operation, but it cannot include competition which means "either you live or I live". In co-operation, rewards are shared, in competition they are monopolised.

40 The information which has come before us regarding the Abundant Life Movement started with the aid of the funds received from America, presumably in terms of "the strategy of the Christian enterprise to win these great under-privileged masses to a more abundant personal and social life" (page 126, Christian Mission in Rural India) shows that it is confined to the converted Christians and intended to encounter Communism. The Jeevan Tara Movement in Damoh and the farm purchased by Dr. Clines in the Yeotmal district are also meant to benefit the Christian converts. Nowhere did we find Christians taking part in the nation-building activities. At page 158, National Christian Council Review, April 1955, even a Christian writer admits that Indian Christians, as a whole, have not identified themselves with nation-building activities.

#### Danger of Foreign Control during Crisis

41 The tendency to keep the Christians separate from the mass of the people and under Missionary control engenders the suspicion that they might be used in critical times to promote foreign interests, as was attempted to be done by the Missionaries of Chhota Nagpur, by the offer of 10,000 aimed Kols and by Dr. Mason in Burma, of a battalion of Karens, in the critical year of 1857 (page 206, History of Missions in India, by Richter). The recent hostile attitude of the Karens, Nagas and Ambonese points in the same direction (p. 215, Christianity and Asian Revolution). It is, therefore, necessary to have a strict watch on the activities of Missionaries in the hill tribes areas.

42 The idea underlying the Christian Mission in Rural India (Dr. Butterfield's report) was to facilitate mass proselytization. The work was conceived either to forestall the national effort to rehabilitate the villages or to show that without Christianising the villages the rehabilitation of the villages was not possible. But what do the Missions now think about the work of the Government? In the Blue Book Annual Report of the Evangelical and Reformed Church, for the year 1954, it is said, "India is changing so rapidly that even those who are closely connected with the country through our Missionary endeavours find it difficult to keep up with every phase of our political, economic, social and religious development. Within seven years after gaining Independence,

India has moved into a place of world leadership. In spite of adverse circumstances intensified by drought, floods, and other calamities, Communism and resurgent Hinduism have been held in check. India's progress in social and economic welfare leaves one astounded. Two and a half million additional acres have been brought under irrigation during the past year. Some 5,000 wells were dug to provide a more adequate water-supply. Foodgrains were increased by eleven million tons last year in spite of devastating floods. New fertilizer plants, research centres, laboratories, schools and colleges are the order of the day. Recently, divorce laws were enacted which prove how quickly India is forgetting her old religious teachings and social customs. To what extent can Christ be regarded "the Hope of the World" in such a situation? Is man after all "the architect of his own salvation?" What relevance have Christian Missions in a country like India? Perhaps the remarks of a leading Hindu gentleman in Raipur indicated the answer when he said, "These plans will succeed if character is built up" and an honoured leader of our Evangelical and Reformed Church said, "we must provide the heaven." Jesus announced "I am the Way, the Truth and the Life" (page 61)

43 It is not easy to understand why the Missions should be surprised if man becomes the architect of his own salvation. Perhaps it is because the Missions look askance at "material industrialism" and "the Utopian expectations" of non-Christian religions.

44 The Hindu gentleman must have known that centuries before Christ the Indian Rishis proclaimed "Truth wins ever, not falsehood, with truth is paved the way to the divine (Mundaka Upanishad quoted at page 67, *Discovery of India* by Shri Nehru). To the Hindu, "character" has ethical implications, but one usually finds that in the Missionary literature and speeches character is stressed as "Christian character." What is the kind of Christian character based on truth that the Missionary wants to build up? Is it to create men of Christian character that the mass movements in Formosa have been initiated? (page 49, *World Christian Handbook* 1952). Perhaps, it is necessary to do so for the reason that Chiang-Kai-Shek proclaimed himself as a "follower of Jesus Christ" and added that the success of his revolution depended upon men of faith and of character and that the best of his officers were Christians and the large number of his Generals were the members of the Church! (pages 424-425, *The Meeting of East and West* by Northrop)

44-A On many occasions Gandhiji expressed his suspicion about the ulterior motives of Missionary enterprise. Dr Asirvatham points out that such a suspicion springs from the manifestation of the American foreign policy in such aggressive forms as in the slogan "Let Asians fight Asians" (page 35, *Christianity in the Indian Crucible*)

45 As the United States has no territory abroad she tries to compensate for this by establishing military bases and military alliances (page 22, Christianity and Asian Revolution) It appears that by this drive of proselytization in India she desires to create psychological bases The persons who came before us expressed such suspicions about American aims very strongly, and this is also pointed out at page 23 of the aforesaid book in these words "The West is using the threat of Communism as an excuse to regain political mastery over the liberated peoples" The American Missionary activity in some of its aspects, is too tinged with the anti-communist world strategy to elude notice (p 29, World Christian Handbook) Morrison in his report on the subject of "Religious Liberty in the Near East, 1948", also notes in more places than one that there is a suspicion of the foreign Mission being the agents of foreign political power His conclusion is remarkably frank in these words "No doubt in the past Missions have been used to promote political ends" (page 49)

46 In a lecture which the Director of the Commission of the Churches on International Affairs, Dr O Frederick Nolde, delivered in 1954, he declared that the effectiveness of the United Nations would be dependent upon the extent to which real world community existed recognising no national frontiers He accordingly asked the Christians who are party to the ecumenical fellowship which recognises no national frontiers to view the problem in three aspects, viz (i) the standpoint of faith and life within the churches, (ii) the need to promote world community, (iii) the United States "potential contribution to world peace and justice" (National Christian Council Review April 1954, page 195)

47 As one reads the Christian literature one comes across phrases like 'colony of heaven' 'historical community of the redeemed', a Christian being "in but not of the country" suggesting that a Christian does not belong to the country of which he is a citizen and on this basis he is expected to view the problems from the point of view of the United States idea of peace and justice

48 It must not be understood here that we cast any reflection on the United States' desire for peace and justice Our object is only to point out that while in Christian countries the loyalty between Christ and country is not divided it comes to be divided in non-Christian countries like India The "World Christian community" suggests the idea of Christendom under the domination of the West for the achievement of world peace through Western unity and supremacy in armed strength The drive for proselytization appears to stem from the conception of denationalising the Christians in India in the way expressed by Lord Bryce "community of religion, in carrying the educated native Christians far away from the native Hindu or Muslim, brings him comparatively near to the European" (page 57, Volume I, Studies in History and Jurisprudence)

49 Unfortunately, some of the features conspicuous in the history of the Missionary enterprise in Asia betray its political character

### Historical Missions and Politics

50 When Carpini was sent to China in the 13th century apparently to expound to the heathen the truth of Christianity, he went in reality on a Mission of Espionage, an instance of religion being used for political purposes (pages 376-77, *Asia and Western Dominance—Panikkar*) Writing about Missionary activities in China even the Missionary historian Latourette had to point out that “the church had become a partner in Western Imperialism” (page 425 *ibid*)

51 In Japan also it was discovered in 1596 that the Christian Missions were being used for political purposes A Spanish Captain of a ship admitted that the object of converting the people to Christianity was to secure allies in conquering their Mother country (page 843, *Story of Civilization* by Durant) It is with reference to Japan that Sir A Toynbee observes that an aggressive foreign religion will in fact be an immediate menace to a society that it is assailing on account of “the danger of the converts being used as a fifth column” (p 58, *The World and the West* B B C, Reith Lecture—1952)

52 In India, St Xavier enlisted the support of the Portuguese King in putting political pressure upon people to become Christians (page 44, *History of Christian Missions*, Richter) That was because “the Portuguese were confronted with a civilization older than that of Europe, with men more highly educated and more deeply learned than their own priests and men of letters, and with religions and customs and institutions whose wisdom equalled their antiquity (page 16, *Albuquerque*, by Morse Stephens *Rulers of India Series*) It was from this time that Christian theology has been carrying on a severe struggle with the Indian religious philosophy

53 The Protestants did not enter the field until the beginning of the 19th century Missions to foreign fields had not always been regarded as the immediate duty of the Church Melancthon thought that Christ’s injunction which had been given to the Apostles had already been fulfilled (*Rethinking Missions*, page 7) Even as late as 1796, Dr Hamilton, declared in the general Assembly of the Church of Scotland that to spread abroad the knowledge of the Gospel among the heathen nations was highly romantic and visionary (page 18, *Missionary Principles and Practice* by Speer) But what is noteworthy is that the three bursts of Christian Mission activities after the Apostolic Epoch have been contemporaneous with periods of military, exploring and commercial activities (page 10, *Rethinking Missions*) The business interest and the naval and military genius including the “younger sons” were the allies of the imperialist To this motley company of businessmen, fighting men and younger sons came to be added

"another incongruous element the "Missionary" The 19th century saw a sudden expansion of Missionary efforts "Going out to preach a Kingdom not of this world, Missionaries found themselves very often builders of very earthly empires" (Page 63, Imperialism and World Politics by Parker Thomas Moon) As Professor Robinson and Beard have well expressed the matter "the way for imperialism has been smoothed by the Missionaries" There have been always ardent Christians ready to obey the command "go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature" (page 25, World Politics in Modern Civilization by Dr Barnes) As Dr Dennis, Mr Mc Donald, Professor Latourette and Professor E C Moore have shown, the Missionary movement has always been closely linked up with the expansion of European Civilization and the growth of modern imperialism (Page 25, *ibid*) Gospel, glory and gold was the slogan consciously or unconsciously of the new order (Page 27, *ibid*) All this is also pointed out by Sir A Toynbee, in B B C Reith Lectures, 1952, at page 2

### **Evangelism not a Religious Philosophy but a Force**

54 The writer of the article in "Life" Magazine (February 1956), referred to above observes "to Western Europeans communism is not so much a philosophy as a force" This was very true in the case of Christianity as it appeared to the Indians when it entered this country This is borne out by Abbe Dubois' remark that the Hindus soon found that those Missionaries were in fact nothing else but disguised Feringis who had of late invaded their country (Page XXV, Hindu Manners, Customs and Ceremonies, Clarendon Press, 1906)

### **Church in India not Independent**

55 Rev J Sadiq said that the undermentioned Churches in India were members of the World Council

- (1) Church of India, Burma, etc
- (2) United Church of Northern India
- (3) Church of South India
- (4) Mar Thoma Syrian Church of Malabar
- (5) Orthodox Syrian Church of Malabar
- (6) Evangelical Lutheran Church of India

56 It is said that the Churches in India are independent It, however, came to our notice that the foreign Missionaries were still closely associated with the Churches and exercised influence through the purse "As long as I have to administer money, or be in a place where my 'authority' is the deciding point", says Rev R M Bennett, "then I begin to wonder whether my presence here in India is more of a hindrance than a blessing" (p 379, National Christian Council Review, October 1955) This can be illustrated by the instance of the United Church of Northern India That Church is a union of Churches formed through the work and witness of 11 Missions in Northern India It depends for its existence upon the funds supplied by many assisting foreign Missionary organisations which are either national or denominational Their

list is to be found on pages 15 and 16 of the Christian Hand Book of India, 1954-55. The Churches which supply funds through their respective missions continue to be national as before. These Churches exercise control over the Indian Churches through the operation of the condition 'partnership in obedience'. Although the money coming from abroad is styled donation it is a donation subject to the above condition. The Indian Churches receiving the money would certainly be accountable to the source from which the money proceeds. They are, therefore, accountable to some authority above them in a foreign country. This was the point stressed by Rev R C Das, before us. To say that X, who receives money for a certain purpose and is accountable to Y, is an equal partner with Y is a contradiction in terms. "The partnership in obedience" savours of the Subsidiary Alliance which the conquering British had with the Nizam.

#### Meaning of Supra-Nationalism

57 We have shown how supra-nationalism is propagated among Christians in India. It really means allegiance to a Theocratic State, styled the Universal Church. Even if it meant internationalism, one fails to see how one can be an internationalist without being a nationalist, as pointed out by Dr Asirvatham. Nationalism which was the predominant motive force in the past is now discarded in the West as a political disease (Preface to the Nationalities of Europe, Cambridge University Press). In his Reith Lectures 1952, Sir A Toynbee, deplors that in Asia nationalism should have obtained a foothold. We, however, find that the Western Churches which are members of the World Council of Churches still continue to be national as ever before, and they exercise control over the different churches in India through the aid which they send.

#### Inordinate Increase of American Missionary Personnel

58 If the Churches in India are really independent they could be trusted to look after their own affairs independently without the aid of the foreign personnel, but it is remarkable that there has been a striking increase in the number of foreign Missionaries. Assuming that they have come out to India, inspired by compassion for the needy and the distressed, it is not clear why they should concentrate their compassion on particular sections with a view to their proselytization. This tends to show that the object of this substantial increase in the foreign personnel is other than purely spiritual. This has been well expressed by Dr Asirvatham in these words, "One may speculate on the amount of tolerance that would be shown by the United States if the stream of Hindu Missionaries to that country became as great as the stream of Christian Missionaries to India" (P 28, Christianity in the Indian Crucible).

#### Conversion and Proselytism

59. Let us now turn to consider the implications of conversion and proselytism. We have had the advantage of perusing an article on this subject by Marcus Ward in The Christian Home No 30,

1954, page 7 He says, "Conversion and proselytism are not identical Broadly speaking, to proselytize means to induce an individual or a group, by various motives, high and low, to change the outward allegiance, the religious label" He does not deny that in the past and the present there are Christians who are guilty of doing this and that it also happens as between different Christian groups He recalls Jesus' own condemnation of such proselytism

60 We have described how in the mass movement carried on in Suiguja district money flowed and how one "evangelist" called the "rival evangelist" a *bhedia* (wolf) Thousands were "converted" for the promotion of the world community of the Universal Church

61 The word conversion may be viewed in different aspects Spiritually, conversion marks the first step, and it is followed by Purification, Illumination and Union Intellectually, it means assent by conviction, ethically, the spontaneous feeling of reverence for a true saint All this is as far apart from the "Missionary conversions" as anything can be As stated by Everett Cattell, most men come with a need, social, physical, economic or the like, and an awakened faith that Christ could meet that need (P 17 Ways of Evangelism) The Missionary, as the representative of Christ, meets such material needs and thereby obtains influence on the person helped It is this influence which brings about the change of religion Is this conversion or proselytism? The large number of reversions, which were admitted before us and the statement in the Children of Han, prove that the motive is not religious, but social and economic (See page 226) That the stress is laid on adding to the numbers of those changing their labels is clear from Dr Pickett's statement, "Many of the later converts are proving as successful in winning others to Christ as the first converts were" He is, however, sorry to note that, "There are Christians who complain that instead of making new converts the Mission should spend its fund for the benefit of the older Christians and their families" (page 55, *Ways of Evangelism*) The schools and medical institutions facilitate this accomplishment of the change of allegiance.

### Conversion and Politics

62 What is the underlying idea of so-called conversions? Marcus Ward himself refers to the result of the study of Dr A D Nock and quotes his opinion, "All these things we see as movements governed and directed by political and other considerations, conditioned by the intellectual atmosphere of the times" (Christian Home No 30, 1954, page 8)

63 In the light of this statement and the actual experience of all the colonial countries we are asked to believe in the sincerity of the claim "without being false to its origin the Christian Church cannot help being aggressive it holds its King's Commission to make Disciples of all Nations and proclaim the good



news with a view to conversion of the fact that God in Christ has entered history to save, and that power to remake life is available to all (page 9 *ibid*). How this power to remake was exercised in Anno Domini was well described by Jefferson already referred to above. If the King's Commission was there from the beginning why (apart from the views of Melancthon and Dr. Hamilton) should "the three bursts of Christian activity after the Apostolic Epoch have been contemporaneous with periods of military exploring and commercial activities" (*Rethinking Missions*, page 10) and now contemporaneous with the cold war which is described by a well-known leader is synonymous with non-violent militarism?

64 It is because a creed can also be used as a tool that it comes into play in the exciting periods of history. It is used for the disruption of the society which is assailed. This is effected by what is called training in "the leadership of the Church" which involves training in Western Theology, ideas and methods of evangelism on modern commercial lines. In short, it is intended to change the heritage and the history of the proselytes as stated by Rev Das and Rev Williams. Shri Donald Groom's opinion also is similar. This is amply proved when one reads a book called *The Heritage of an Indian Christian*.

### Religion and Society

65 The close relation of religion to the social heritage of the person professing it is well described by Dr. A. C. Bouquet in these words: "to pass from one religious group to another has come to mean to sever one's connection with the entire adjustment to life and the entire way of living into which one has been born and into which therefore one fits by tradition. Religion in such circumstances is much more than a belief or theory superimposed upon a neutral system of social life. It is actually a social system and to abandon it is to ostracise oneself from all other members of one's cultural group" (P. 168 *Comparative Religion* by Dr. Bouquet Pelican Books).

66 It is on account of this foreign influence brought to bear upon the Christian converts that Christianity is still regarded as foreign in India.

67 The various ways which we have already indicated are nothing short of abuse of "the religious liberty" accorded by the Constitution of India.

68 The mass conversions effected in the Surguja district could hardly be justified as exercise of religious liberty. Such mass conversions were reprobated by Gandhiji and also disapproved by Dr. E. Stanley Jones as they involved little or no spiritual or moral change (Page 36 *Christianity in the Indian Crucible*). Dr. Nicol MacNicol regarded the mass movements as a hindrance to the self-realization of the Indian Church (page 29, *The Spontaneous Expansion of the Church*).

### Admonitions by National Leaders

69 On this point we may turn to the opinion of some of the national leaders. Sardar Patel said, "let them (the Missionaries) go on serving the suffering with their hospitals and dispensaries, educate the poor and give selfless service to the people. They can even carry on their propaganda in a peaceful manner. But let them not use mass conversions for political ends. we want them to identify themselves with the people and make India their home" (quoted at page 138, *The Whole World is My Neighbour*, by E. De Meulder, S.J.)

70 Rajkumari Amrit Kaur sent a message on October 3, 1948, to the Christian Congress in Columbus, Ohio, as follows. "I understand that your Conference plans a large advance in the better equipment of Mission schools, colleges, hospitals and agricultural and industrial institutions in the East. I am aware of the valuable contributions made by all such institutions in the past. The old outlook, however, of Christian Missionaries being sent East to convert people to Christianity is outmoded and no longer welcome to India, but I believe that all those who will come to India and to help to serve her needs as friends will always be welcome" (Page 14, *The Christian Task in Independent India*—Appaswamy). We may as well refer to the opinion expressed by President Sockarno, in his inaugural address at the Bandung Conference, 1955. "It is true", he said, "each religion has its own history its own individuality, its own *raison d'être*, its special pride in its own beliefs, its own mission, its special truths which it desires to propagate but unless you realize that all great religions are one in their message of tolerance and in their insistence on the observance of the principle of "live and let live" unless the followers of each religion are prepared to give the same consideration to the rights of others everywhere religion is debased" (Page 218 *India Quarterly* July-September 1955)

71 The manner in which the Missionary movement goes on in certain places is clearly intended to serve some political purpose in the cold-war. If an activity is found to be political but carried on under the cloak of religion, the continuance of such activity is fraught with danger to the security of the State. Moreover to exploit the need and distress of people for adding to the numbers of what is styled world community for the purpose of promoting the cause of world peace and justice as conceived by a foreign nation is interference in the internal affairs of India, and it is repugnant to the principles of "Pancha Shila" (page 214, *India Quarterly* July-September 1955)

72 We recommend that those Missionaries whose primary object is proselytization should be asked to withdraw. The large influx of foreign Missionaries is undesirable and should be checked. There has been of late so deep a suspicion in many countries as has

already been mentioned above, that even the Missionaries think that they will have to withdraw. In the Foreword of the "Spontaneous Expansion of the Church", it is anticipated that the Missionaries may be driven out of many countries. We are informed that the Missionaries are themselves willing to withdraw and transfer their property. This is also recommended at page 29 in *The Missionary Obligation of the Church*, 1952, viz., that properties now registered in the name of foreign Mission bodies should be transferred to National Churches or holding bodies or to an International Holding Body.

73 The question of foreign money coming to India will also have to be considered. The mere withdrawal of the foreign personnel and the transfer of properties without cutting off the supplies of money received from abroad will always continue to keep the Indian churches under foreign control and direction. The Lutheran Church in India is represented to be thoroughly Indianised. But how it is sought to be kept under control by the foreign churches is clear from the statement of Rev. Lakra himself, viz., "after the two world-wars several of the large Missions claimed to have given autonomy to the churches established on the field. But in practice the Home Board continues to control the policy and purse of these autonomous Churches. The foreign Missionary has still a large voice in the affairs of the autonomous Churches. The result is that indigenous Christians are still dependent on the parent bodies" (Page 60, *Ways of Evangelism*, 1953). It is this dependence on foreign support which is responsible for perpetuating the denominations which, as Dr. Moses observes, sowed the seeds of division in India. Rev. E. L. Anant Rao thinks that if the foreign financial support is withdrawn altogether a large number of Christians who are now divided will become one (page 546 *National Christian Council Review*, December 1954). Rev. R. M. Bennett frankly declares that as long as evangelism draws heavily on foreign resources the Church in India must expect to bear the stigma of "a foreign Church" (page 382, *National Christian Council Review*, October 1955).

74 We find that the Enquiry into the activities of foreign Missionaries is represented in some quarters as an attack on the Christian community. We unhesitatingly repudiate the charge. The Christian Indians are as rightful citizens of India as Hindus or any other community. We share with some of the thoughtful Christians themselves the view that it is highly undesirable for an important community like the Christians to be in some form or other under foreign domination.

75 Dr. Devanandan points out in "Communism and Social Revolution in India", that 'the denominational loyalties of the Indian Christians are mixed up with vested interests and in a great

measure due to non-theological factors as well. He, therefore, recommends to the Christians in India to think more seriously on the unity of the Church and work to realise it under the leading of the Holy Spirit (page 88)

76 Accordingly the best course for the Indian Churches to follow would be to establish a United Independent Christian Church in India without being dependent on foreign support. We recommend accordingly.

77 In India, there is room for all religions. Rajkumari Amrit Kaur in a letter to Gandhiji in 1937 said, "Are we not all Hindus inasmuch as we are the children of Hind? Is there not room for Jesus in Hinduism? There must be. I cannot believe that any who seek to worship God in spirit and in truth are outside the pale of any of these great religions which draw their inspirations from Him who is the fountain head of all truth" (Page 125, Christian Missions Navajivan Press). She was perfectly right. Sir Alfred Lyall defined a Hindu as denoting three things together—religion, parentage and country (Page 288, Second Series Asiatic Studies). Christianity practised according to the true teaching of Jesus, can never be foreign in India only because Jesus happened to be born in Palestine. By parentage the Christians are of this soil and the Indian heritage is their heritage. As to the country India is as much their country as of the Hindus. Rev Mascarenhas defines a Hindu as "the only child of Mother-India, who never disowns his parent" (Page 44, Quintessence of Hinduism).

78 Hospitals and dispensaries have been the favourite medium of approach to the masses for conversion. This is sought to be justified on the ground that Jesus commanded his disciples to preach and heal. Such scriptural expressions cannot bear literal interpretation. As observed by Sir Charles Eliot, "They are mostly the result of an attempt to describe a mind and will of more than human strength, but the superman thus idealised rarely works miracles of healing. He saves mankind by teaching the way of salvation, not by alleviating a few chance cases of physical distress" (Page 329, Hinduism and Buddhism, Volume I, Reprinted 1954 Routledge).

79 The fact is that it is a kind of inducement held out to make the patients Christians. Dr Thirumallai Pillay (Sagar No 1) said that there was nothing wrong in a Christian Doctor, presenting Christ to his patient in a Christian hospital. Rev E. Raman (Sagar No 2) supporting him said that a doctor should talk on religion as the patient is in a receptive mood. Dr Jeevanmali and others took a somewhat different view. Thus, there is a difference of opinion on the point among the Christians themselves as to the propriety of using medical relief as an inducement to change religion.

80 In the eye of the law the relation between a doctor and patient, lawyer and client, teacher and pupil is a fiduciary one and any influence brought to bear by the doctor, lawyer or teacher on patient, client or pupil would be presumed to be undue influence. It is, therefore, obviously objectionable.

81 This point was considered by the Laymen's Foreign Missions Enquiry Commission presided over by Dr Hocking. They considered the problem in this way: "Shall these philanthropic activities be regarded solely as means to the end of conversion? It was natural that educational and medical work should at first have been regarded as direct auxiliaries to the evangelical work of the Mission: this was the way they grew up. Nevertheless when medical aid or education are thus consciously subordinated to explicit evangelism there are unfortunate effects in various directions including the quality of education or the medical aid. The service ceases to be disinterested. It has an 'ulterior object', the philanthropic object is likely to be pursued in a manner savouring of a commercial interest in the promotion of one's own type of piety. It looks like adulteration of the quality of mercy. It was recognised that the receptive attitude of the patient, the leisure of illness, the fixed association in their mind between healing and the miraculous made the hospital the clinic the dispensary so many opportunities to press for conversion. (Pages 67, 68, 70 *Rebuilding Missions*) In the regional report of the Commission of Appraisal of the Laymen's Foreign Missions Enquiry Volume I (India-Burma) among the principles which were offered by the Committee as the basis of religious activities in Mission Hospitals are to be found the following:

- (1) The use of medical or other professional service as a direct means of making converts is improper;
- (2) Evangelistic services in wards and dispensaries from which patients cannot escape are a subtle form of coercion and must therefore be given up. (Page 189 *ibid*)

82 Gandhiji also reprehended the use of hospitals for proselytization by stigmatising it as commercialisation of medical aid (Page 227. *Christian Missions* Navajivan Press). As this is not a matter of pure Ethics and as the duty of Government is to protect the weaker sections of society we recommend that the use of medical or other professional services as a direct means of making converts should be prohibited by law.

### Schools

83. As regards schools it is clear that the Roman Catholics use the primary schools in the villages for conversion. Their strategy is to catch the second generation. There have been many complaints before us about the various methods they follow for influencing the tender mind of the pupils in the primary

schools The Lutheran Mission avowedly uses schools for securing converts from among the youngsters In *Gharbandhu*, March 1953, p 8, there is a clear statement

“इस मिशन क्षेत्र का उद्देश यह है कि स्कूल द्वारा मसीह का प्रचार किया जावे . . . . .”

84 We have already given instances of the kind of subtle methods followed in the schools to induce, or to bring pressure on the boys to attend the Bible classes In a secular State which conducts its own schools or supports private schools by its grants, students that are turned out would be expected to be thinkers, not blind believers in dogmas

85 In the schools the emphasis must be laid on the development of moral ideas Text books on moral lessons should contain the lives of all great founders of religions, saints and philanthropists to stimulate the desire for leading a pure life and to inducing in them the sense of social service

86 There is a clear provision in our Constitution to the effect that no pupil should be asked to attend any religious class without the express permission of his parent or guardian In the course of our enquiry we found that this provision of the Constitution was not strictly enforced, in the absence of special forms provided for the purpose We recommend that the department of Education should see that proper forms are prescribed and made available to every school

87 To check abuses prevalent regarding conversion from one religion to another it appears desirable to adopt the rule in force in Greece It is as follows —

“Any attempt by force, or threats of illicit means, or grants of promises of financial or other aid or by fraudulent means or promises or by moral and material assistance, or by taking advantage of any person's inexperience or confidence, or by exploiting any person's necessity or spiritual (mental) weakness or thoughtlessness, or, in general, any attempt or effort (whether successful or not) directly or indirectly to penetrate into the religious conscience of persons (whether of age or under age) of another faith, for the purpose of consciously altering their religious conscience or faith, so as to agree with the ideas or convictions of the proselytising party, should be absolutely prohibited (page 112. *Religious Liberty* by Bates)

by the Government departmentally as a part of its social welfare work or the work may be entrusted to private bodies with grants in-aid given to them, but it should always be subject to the rule that there should be no religious propaganda of a particular type

90 Our main duty being to make recommendations to Government, we have normally to confine ourselves to such suggestions as can be acted upon by the Government within the framework of the Constitution. But in the special circumstances of this problem in India we have thought it advisable to make a few suggestions for consideration of authoritative Mission organisations operating in Madhya Pradesh. Indian Christians are loud in their profession of loyalty to Independent India. Especially, so are the Roman Catholics. Suspicion, however, exists. This is mainly because of the Indian Christian subservience to foreign influence and because of the Western interest in saving India from Communism. The Roman Catholics support the Congress Government mainly because they are anti-communist. There seems to be an unholy alliance between Roman Catholics and American money to save India from Communism. The West must realise that this is none of their business and that Independent India needs no foreign help in solving its economic and social problems. For Christian Missions to interest themselves in such economic and social problems and help in finding solutions for them would be regarded as extra-religious activity and as highly undesirable. The Abundant Life Movement near Bilaspur and the Jeevantara Movement near Damoh are naturally suspected, because the big money involved comes from outside and is expended without the co-operation and advice of non-Christian leaders and purports to build up the Christian community in India. Missionary and Indian Christian indifference and even opposition to national efforts and the removal of social and economic injustices, like the Harijan Sevak Sangh activities, the Kasturba Trust Women Services and Social Welfare Schemes sponsored by Government, reveal an attitude of mind not primarily interested in human well-being but in people as prospective converts to various denominations. In the present secular State of India, the best safeguard any minority could have, is the goodwill of the majority community and the right attitude of the minority is one of trust and confidence in the fair sense of the majority. Indian Christians are not likely to suffer in the least in this manner. There has been no discrimination against Christians as a community anywhere in Madhya Pradesh. In fact, Christians have got more than their numerical share in offices under the State. Cries of Christisthan or Massihisthan are foolish and dangerous. Young, independent India, still smarting under memories of the partition of India on grounds of religion is very sensitive to anything dangerous to the solidarity and security of the country. There are those who foolishly use, or encourage the use of expressions that smack of politics, or anything divisive. Even terms like "Kingdom of God" must be explained in their true spiritual sense in order to

obviate the hurting of any susceptibility. How much more should Christians dissociate themselves from demands for a Jharkhand State or an Adivasisthan? An Indian today, high caste or Adivasi, Hindu or Christian, whose heart does not glow with love and devotion to his Motherland, which is making such tremendous advances, is untrue to his genius and disloyal to his nation. It is not sufficiently realised that Western Christianity is the result of a marriage between Hebraism, the Semetic heritage, and Greco-Roman culture. A real welding of Indian spirituality and Hebrew ethics might result in a Christianity that might enrich the whole world. An Indian Christianity, that is really Indian and truly Christian, might give a lead to World Christianity. An Indian Christianity that emphasises its essentials, and holds lightly to its trappings mainly of Western devising, will find a welcome from India that is awakening from its lethargy under centuries of foreign domination. Unfortunately, Indian Christianity under the leading grip of the West is not sufficiently aware of the hands stretched out to welcome it. If Christianity in India does not accept the co-operation of the best, it will get the opposition of the worst and that will not be very much to its liking. Christian Missions, and Christianity in general have been a great stimulant to India, awaking the people to their duties, making them realise the grossness of their neglect as in the case of Harijans. They have done a great service along these lines and they ought to rejoice that their labours have borne fruits in a purified Hinduism and an awakened Indian Society. If Missionaries from the West with their specialised training and aptitudes are willing to serve India, without the ulterior motive of adding to the numerical strength of the denominations they belong to, they will be truly representative of their Master and be doing their best to win for Him the heart of India. We have come across a few such who find in disinterested service to India their true reward, who have been taken into the hearts of the people. We wish Christianity in India to become truly Indian and truly Christian and the religions of India to come together in genuine co-operation giving a lead to the nations in peaceful co-existence. *We recommend to Government to issue an appeal to authoritative and representative Christian Missionary organisations and to Christians in general to come together and to form an authoritative organisation which should lay down and inform Government in clear terms the policy which the Missions and Christians in general will follow in respect of propagating their religion. The policy to be followed in conversions, the type of propaganda to be permitted and the attempts which will be made to combine their evangelistic activities within the limits of public order, morality and health. Such a clear enunciation of policy will not only enable the various Missions to function freely in their spheres but will also secure the co-operation of the Government and will thus dispel the prejudice entertained by non-Christian religions.*



91. We have already mentioned that in certain quarters a feeling is entertained that Article 25 of the Constitution of India gives a right to any person, including foreigners temporarily residing in India, to propagate his religion and that this right includes the right to secure converts. Whether the right to propagate does or does not include a right to convert has been a matter of great controversy. We consider it desirable that the matter should not be left vague or indefinite and recommend that an amendment of the Constitution may be sought, firstly, to clarify that the right of propagation has been given only to the citizens of India, and secondly, that it does not include conversion brought about by force, fraud, or illicit means.

92. There appears to be a perpetual controversy as to whether undesirable methods are used for bringing about conversions to Christianity. In our enquiry we have found that such methods are used on a large scale and that instances of conversions due to a genuine conviction are extremely rare. Whatever may have happened in the past we consider it undesirable that such a controversy should be allowed to rage in the State for all time to come. *We, therefore, recommend suitable control on conversions brought about through illegal means. If necessary legislative measures should be enacted.* In our opinion, this legislation should secure the compulsory registration of all religious bodies engaged in conversions and providing social services to persons of other than their own religious persuasion. The property of such bodies should be constituted into public trusts and they should be required to maintain accounts in a prescribed manner to be audited through Chartered Accountants appointed by Government and should be published for general information. The legislation should also secure submission of monthly or quarterly lists, giving names and addresses of persons of another faith seeking information about Christianity and also lists giving names and addresses of persons baptised.

93. To implement the provisions of this legislation we recommend that Advisory Boards at State level, Regional level and District level be constituted of non-officials. Minority communities like Tribals and Harijans should be in a majority on these Boards. The function of these Boards will be to advise Government on such matters as the voluntariness or otherwise of individual conversions in a locality, the propaganda methods used, to scrutinise pamphlets and propaganda literature in circulation in various areas, to recommend the recognition and grants-in-aid to educational and other institutions run by religious bodies and in general to secure fulfilment of the conditions on which recognition or grants may be accorded.

94. We recommend that no baptisms should be allowed unless approved by the State Board on recommendations of the district and regional boards, that no schools should be allowed to

be opened unless approved by the State Board as above and that no hospitals should be permitted to be run without the State Board's approval as above

95. To prevent misuse of hospitals including clinics and sanatoria for purposes of proselytization, the rules relating to the registration of doctors, nurses and other auxiliary personnel should be suitably amended to provide a condition against evangelistic activities during professional services

Government should also take action to prevent persons other than registered medical practitioners to practise medicine in rural areas, especially in Scheduled Areas

96 An effective control on literature meant for religious propaganda and in circulation in the State is obviously desirable. We recommend that circulation of such literature without the approval of Government should be totally prohibited. If necessary, a law should be enacted. The State Government should accord approval on the recommendations of the State Advisory Board as suggested by us above.

97 We have noticed that although recognition has been granted and grants-in-aid given to educational and other institutions run by religious organisations there is practically no supervision by the staff to see whether conditions of recognition are being fulfilled and whether the grants sanctioned have been utilised in the prescribed manner. We recommend that there should be compulsory quarterly inspections of these institutions by officers of Government

98 The earlier the Government realises its sole responsibility to provide social services like education, health, medicine and other amenities to people living in the Scheduled Areas, the better it would be to prevent exploitation of or proselytization of illiterate aborigines. We recommend that Government should lay down a policy that the responsibility to provide social services in these areas will be solely of the State Government and adequate services should be provided as early as possible. Non-official organisations should be permitted to run or maintain social service institutions only for the members of their own religious faith

99 So far as our information goes no single department of Government is in administrative charge of the various activities of the religious organisations in this State. Considering the very large number of such organisations the wide area covered by their activities and the very large percentage of Tribals and Harijans and other backward classes residing in this State we recommend the creation of a separate department of cultural and religious affairs at State level whose functions should be—

- (a) To co-ordinate the activities of the various departments like Police, department in charge of Passport, Visas, etc., Education, Medical, etc., etc.

- (b) To control the advent of foreigners in Tribal areas
- (c) To control grants-in-aid by Central and State Governments to institutions maintained by religious bodies.
- (d) To control foreign assistance to such bodies.
- (e) To determine the extent to which non-official agencies should be allowed to provide social service like health education, etc. independently of Government to Tribal areas.
- (f) To supervise the proper use of grant-in-aid to institutions.
- (g) To promote good will among the various religious bodies or groups and to see that the conversions are voluntary.

We feel that this department should be in charge of a Minister of the Scheduled Castes, Tribes and the Backward Classes and that it should have especially trained personnel and its machinery should extend to the village level.

100. We make the following other recommendations —

(1) No non-official agency should be permitted to secure foreign assistance except through State channels. Employment of technical or administrative foreign personnel should be treated as part of foreign assistance.

(2) No foreigner should be allowed to function in a Scheduled or specified area either independently or as a member of a religious institution unless he has given a declaration in writing that he will not take part in politics.

(3) The State should prescribe forms on which institutions should obtain consent of parents and guardians for implementation of the Conscience Clause.

(4) Programmes of social and economic uplift by non-official or religious bodies should be approved by the State on recommendations of the Board.



organization which should lay down and inform Government in clear terms the policy which the Missions and Christians in general will follow in respect of propagating their religion, the methods to be followed in conversions, the type of propaganda which will be promoted and the attempts which will be made to confine their evangelistic activities within the limits of public order, morality and health (Paragraph 90 *ibid*).

(9) An amendment of the Constitution of India may be sought, firstly to clarify that the right of propagation has been given only to the citizens of India and secondly that it does not include conversion brought about by force, fraud or other illicit means. (Paragraph 91 *ibid*)

(10) Suitable control on conversions brought about through illegal means should be imposed. If necessary Legislative measures should be enacted. (Paragraph 92 *ibid*).

(11) Advisory Boards at State level, regional level and district level should be constituted of non-officials, minority communities like Tribals and Harijans being in a majority on these boards (Paragraph 93 *ibid*)

(12) Rules relating to the registration of Doctors, Nurses and other personnel employed in hospitals should be suitably amended to provide a condition against evangelistic activities during professional services (Paragraph 95 *ibid*)

(13) Circulation of literature meant for religious propaganda without approval of the State Government should be prohibited (Paragraph 96 *ibid*)

(14) Institutions in receipt of grants-in-aid or recognition from Government should be compulsorily inspected every quarter by officers of Government (Paragraph 97 *ibid*)

(15) Government should lay down a policy that the responsibility of providing social services like education, health, medicine, etc., to members of scheduled tribes, castes and other backward classes will be solely of the State Government, and adequate services should be provided as early as possible, non-official organizations being permitted to run institutions only for members of their own religious faith. (Paragraph 98 *ibid*)

(16) A separate department of Cultural and Religious affairs should be constituted at the State level to deal with these matters which should be in charge of a Minister belonging to a scheduled caste, tribe or other backward classes and should have specially trained personnel at the various levels. (Paragraph 99 *ibid*).

(17) No non-official agency should be permitted to secure foreign assistance except through Government channels. (Paragraph 100 *ibid*)

(18) No foreigner should be allowed to function in a scheduled or a specified area either independently or as a member of a religious institution unless he has given a declaration in writing that he will not take part in politics (Paragraph 100 *ibid*)

(19) Programmes of social and economic uplift by non-official or religious bodies should receive prior approval of the State. (Paragraph 100 *ibid*)

(B P PATHAK)  
*Member-Secretary.*

(M B NIYOGI)  
*Chairman*

(GHANSHYAM SINGH GUPTA)  
*Member*

(S K GEORGE)  
*Member.*

(RATANLAL MALVIYA)  
*Member.*

(BHANU PRATAP SINGH)  
*Member.*



# APPENDICES

## APPENDIX I

### GOVERNMENT OF MADHYA PRADESH POLITICAL AND MILITARY DEPARTMENT

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#### RESOLUTION<sup>a</sup>

Nagpur, the 14th April 1954

No. 318-716-V-CON —Whereas representations have been made to Government from time to time that Christian Missionaries, either forcibly or through fraud and temptations of monetary and other gain, convert illiterate aboriginals and other backward people thereby offending the feelings of non-Christians,

And whereas it has further been represented that Missions are utilised directly or indirectly for purposes of political or extra-religious objectives,

And whereas the Christian Missionaries have repudiated these allegations and have asserted on the other hand that their activities are confined solely to religious propaganda and towards social, medical and educational work,

And whereas the Missionaries have further alleged that they are being harassed by non-Christian people and local officials,

And as agitation is growing on either side;

The State Government consider it desirable in the public interest to have a thorough inquiry made into the whole question through an impartial Committee

2 Government are accordingly pleased to constitute a Committee consisting of the following —

#### *Chairman*

- (1) Dr Bhawani Shankar Niyogi, M.A., LL.M., LL.D., ex-Chairman, Public Service Commission, Madhya Pradesh and Retired Chief Justice, High Court of Judicature at Nagpur

#### *Members*



- (4) Shri Bhanupratapsingh Giri Raj Singh Deo, M. P., of Komakhan, Tahsil Mahasamund, District Raipur
  - (5) Shri S K George, M A, B D, Professor, Commerce College, Wardha
  - (6) Shri B P Pathak, Secretary to Government, Madhya Pradesh, Public Health Department
- Shri B P Pathak will act as Secretary to the Committee

3 The Committee shall enquire into the questions mentioned in the preamble and report to Government what the facts are. On a thorough review of the question from historical and other points of view, the Committee may also make recommendations to Government as to the action that Government should take to deal with the situation as disclosed by the inquiry.

4 The Committee is authorised to frame its own procedure for conducting the enquiry and is requested to submit its report to Government with all possible expedition.

By order of the Governor, Madhya Pradesh,  
B. N. KUNTE, Addl Secy

## APPENDIX II

DIRECTORATE OF INFORMATION AND PUBLICITY  
GOVERNMENT OF MADHYA PRADESH

## PRESS NOTE

Impartial enquiry into question of Missionary Activities—State  
Government Appoint Committee

Nagpur, the 16th April 1954

Representations have been made to Government from time to time that Christian Missionaries either forcibly or through fraud and temptations of monetary and other gain convert illiterate aboriginals and other backward people thereby offending the feelings of non-Christians. It has further been represented that Missions are utilised directly or indirectly for purposes of political or extra-religious objectives. The Christian Missionaries have repudiated these allegations and have asserted on the other hand that their activities are confined solely to religious propaganda and towards social, medical and educational work. The Missionaries have further alleged that they are being harassed by non-Christian people and local officials. As agitation has been growing on either side, the State Government consider it desirable in the public interest to have a thorough inquiry made into the whole question through an impartial Committee.

Government have accordingly constituted a committee consisting of the following to enquire into the question and to report to Government what the facts are —

- (1) Dr Bhawani Shankar Niyogi, M A , LL M , LL D , ex-Chairman, Public Service Commission, Madhya Pradesh and Retired Chief Justice, High Court of Judicature at Nagpur—*Chairman*
- (2) Shri Ghanshyam Singh Gupta, B Sc , LL B , ex-Speaker, Madhya Pradesh Legislative Assembly, Durg—*Member*
- (3) Shri Seth Govind Das, M P , Jabalpur—*Member*
- (4) Shri Kirtumant Rao, B A , M L A , Ahiri, tahsil Sironcha, district Chanda—*Member*
- (5) Shri S K George, M A , B D , Professor, Commerce College, Wardha—*Member*
- (6) Shri B P. Pathak, Secretary to Government, Madhya Pradesh, Public Health Department—*Member*.

Shri B P. Pathak, will act as Secretary to the Committee.

On a thorough review of the question from historical and other points of view, the Committee may also make recommendations to Government as to the action that Government should take to deal with the situation as disclosed by the inquiry.

The Committee has been authorised to frame its own procedure for conducting the enquiry and requested to submit its report to Government with all possible expedition

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DIRECTORATE OF INFORMATION AND PUBLICITY  
GOVERNMENT OF MADHYA PRADESH

PRESS NOTE

Enquiry into Missionaries' Activities—Committee  
Invites Information

Nagpur, the 30th April 1954

Public are aware that by a Madhya Pradesh Government Resolution No 318-716-V-CON, dated the 14th April 1954, published in the "Madhya Pradesh Gazette", dated the 16th April 1954, a Committee has been appointed to enquire into the question of the activities of Christian Missionaries and their grievances

The first meeting of the Committee was held on the 30th April 1954 in the Secretariat building

Before the Committee decide on the line of action that they will take in the discharge of duties entrusted to them, it is considered that a sort of a preliminary survey of the problem may be made and with this end in view request the general public, both Christians and non-Christians, individuals and institutions and organizations to send to the Committee such information including any literature that they may have. This will enable the Committee to determine the exact points involved, which may subsequently form the basis of a definite programme for enquiry

The Committee wish to visit almost immediately certain areas which may not be easily accessible afterwards, in order to have a general idea of the problem before them. The Committee will be grateful for suggestions from the public regarding the areas which the Committee should in the first instance visit

All communications are requested to be addressed by name to Shri B. P. Pathak, Secretary to the Committee, Nagpur

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DIRECTORATE OF INFORMATION AND PUBLICITY  
GOVERNMENT OF MADHYA PRADESH

PRESS NOTE

Missionary Activities Enquiry Committee—Selection of  
members explained

Nagpur, the 3rd May 1954.

The attention of Government has been drawn to the criticism that has been expressed in certain quarters against the composition of the Committee recently appointed to investigate the

Missionary activities in the State. Especially, the representative character of Shri S K George has been questioned

Government wish to reiterate—what they have already explained in their communique announcing the appointment of the Committee—that the purpose of the Committee is to conduct an impartial enquiry into certain complaints and counter-complaints regarding the Missionary activities in the State. Therefore, in selecting the members of the committee, Government were anxious to have on it men of unbiased and impartial outlook, who would function more as judges than as advocates of one side or the other. The persons nominated have been chosen on this principle, and the Chairman of the Committee is a retired Chief Justice of the High Court and the former Chairman of the Public Service Commission.

As regards Shri S K George, he is a devout Christian and a nationalist, belonging to the oldest Church in India—the Syrian Christian Church, and has been an educationist and a public worker of more than twenty years' standing. He has pursued theological studies both in India and at Oxford and was also working in Shantiniketan. He has published several books on Christianity. Commenting on his appointment, one of the outstanding Christian leaders in the country described it as a "wise" and "correct" choice.

Government wish to make it quite clear that it is not their intention to interfere with, or curtail in any way the right of every individual to practise his religion. Government trust that all sections of the people will co-operate with the committee in conducting this important enquiry.

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## DIRECTORATE OF INFORMATION AND PUBLICITY GOVERNMENT OF MADHYA PRADESH

### PRESS NOTE

#### Enquiries into the Activities of Christian Missionaries—Committee issues Questionnaire

Nagpur, the 12th November 1954.

Public are aware that the Committee appointed by the Government of Madhya Pradesh, to enquire into the activities of Christian Missionaries in this State undertook a tour of some districts in the State with a view to secure preliminary information regarding the nature of the problem. In the course of these tours, various sections of the people were contacted and they gave information, oral as well as in writing, to the Committee. The Committee received correspondence from the Christians as well as the non-Christians and have also gone through some records of the State Government. They have prepared a questionnaire which is being released separately to the general public. Members of the public and representatives of the various Christian and non-Christian

organisations and institutions are requested to furnish such information on the subjects referred to in the questionnaire, as may be in their possession, supported by documents, if any. Copies of the questionnaire will be supplied to anyone asking for it by the Assistant Secretary, Christian Missionary Activities Enquiry Committee, Secretariat Building, Nagpur-1.

### Replies to reach before the 1st January 1955

The questionnaire is divided into seven parts and members of the public and representatives of organisations are requested to furnish replies to such of the questions only as concern them. It also gives the terms of reference of the Committee and a note for guidance in replying the questions.

Copies of the questionnaire in Hindi and Marathi are under print and will be available for distribution shortly.

The Committee is anxious to submit their report to Government at an early date and shall therefore, appreciate if replies to the questionnaire are sent before the due date, viz., the 1st January 1955.

The Committee trusts that the answers will be framed in the constructive spirit in which the questionnaire has been cast.

## APPENDIX III

*The Statement showing particulars about Protestant Christian Missions operating in Madhya Pradesh and the institutions conducted by the several missions*

## (i) Economic

			Madhya Pradesh	India
(a) Agricultural Settlements			8	64
District	Station	Name		
(1) Betul .	Nimpani .	Amegohan Farm.		
(2) Bilaspur .	Fosterpur .	Fosterpur Farm Settlement		
(3) Chhindwara	Seja ..	Mission Farm.		
(4) Hoshangabad .	Makoriya .	Makoriya Farm Colony.		
(5) Raipur	Bisrampur .	Agricultural Settlement.		
(6) Sagar .	Damoh .	Mission Farm.		
(7) Sagar .	Khurai .	Begahari.		
(8) Yeotmal	Harjuna .	Harjuna Farm Village.		
			Madhya Pradesh	India
(b) Co-operative Societies			6	40
District	Station	Name		
(1) Hoshangabad	Hoshangabad	Rasulia Rural Development Co-operative Society.		
(2) Do	Itarsi ..	Christian Weavers Company		
(3) Raipur	Dhamtari	Christian Co-operative Credit Society, Ltd		
(4) Yeotmal	Taroda .	Christian Weavers Co-operative Society, Ltd.		
(5) Do.	Do.	Christian Education Co-operative Society, Ltd		
(6) Do.	Do.	Co-operative Industrial Association, Ltd		

(ii) Educational—*cont.*

				Madhya Pradesh	India
(e) Industrial Schools .. ..				6	89
District	Station		Name		
(1) Bilaspur ..	Janjgir ..	..	A. C. F. Memorial School, Industrial Department (Weaving and Sewing)		
(2) Do. .	Mauhadih ..	..	A. V. M. Middle School (Industrial Department)		
(3) Chanda ..	Chanda ..	..	Girls Industrial School.		
(4) Raipur .	Jagdeeshpur ..	..	Boys Industrial School.		
(5) Sagar .	Damoh .	.	Do.		
(6) Do ..	Sagar ..		Girls Industrial School.		

				Madhya Pradesh	India
(f) Schools for Missionary Children				1	12
District	Station		Name		
Amravati ..	Chikalda ..	..	Sun Rise School.		

## (iii) Evangelistical

				Madhya Pradesh	India
(a) Theological College and Seminaries.				2	37
District	Station		Name		
(1) Jabalpur ..	Jabalpur .	.	Leonard Theological College		
(2) Yeotmal ..	Yeotmal ..	..	..		

				Madhya Pradesh	India
(b) Pastoral and Evangelistic Workers' Institutions.				7	81
District	Station		Name		
(1) Akola ..	Washim ..	..	Bible Training School.		
(2) Betul ..	Betul .	..	Theological Seminary.		
(3) Do. ..	Shahapur ..	..	Training School for Women.		
(4) Bilaspur ..	Janjgir ..	.	Bible School.		
(5) Do. ..	Takhatpur ..	..	Do.		
(6) Buldana ..	Khamgaon ..	..	Training Bible (Women).		
(7) Do. ..	Buldana ..	..	Bible School for Lay Workers		

(iii) Evangelistical—*cont.*

			Madhya Pradesh	India
(c) Bible Correspondence Courses..	..			48

			Madhya Pradesh	India
(d) Christian Ashrams	..	..	1	31

District	Station	Name
Jabalpur .. ..	Sihora .. ..	Christiapanthi Bhawan.

## (iv) Medical

			Madhya Pradesh	India
(a) Hospital .. ..	..	..	22	266

District	Station	Name
(1) Amravati ..	Ellichpur..	Hospital
(2) Akola ..	Washim ..	Reynold's Hospital
(3) Bastar ..	Jagdalpur	Ruth Comings Hospital and Dispensary.
(4) Bilaspur ..	Bilaspur ..	Jackman Memorial Hospital.
(5) Do	Champa ..	Christian Hospital.
(6) Do ..	Mungeli	Do.
(7) Do	Takhatpur	Do.
(8) Chanda	Chanda	Women's Hospital.
(9) Chanda	Sironcha	Clason Memorial Hospital and Dispensary.
(10) Chhindwara	Seoni	Mission Hospital.
(11) Do	Junnardeo	Hospital
(12) Durg	Baitalpur	Mission Hospital.
(13) Do	Rajnandgaon	Do.
(14) Hoshangabad	Itarsi	Friends Mission Hospital.
(15) Nagpur	Nagpur	Mure Memorial Hospital.
(16) Raipur	Dhamtari	Christian Hospital.
(17) Do.	Jagdeeshpur	Seva Bhawan.
(18) Do.	Tilda	Mission Hospital
(19) Sagar	Damoh	Christian Hospital.
(20) Do	Khurai	Khurai Hospital
(21) Do.	Sagar	Hospital
(22) Yeotmal	Umri ..	Umri Mission Hospital.



(iv) Medical—*cont.*

(b) Dispensaries —In Madhya Pradesh 33 dispensaries in 13 districts out of 22 and in India 223 dispensaries

	Madhya Pradesh	India
(c) Leprosy Institutions ..	5	49

District	Station	Name
(1) Amravati .	Kothara	Leprosy Asylum
(2) Bilaspur	Champa	Do.-
(3) Durg ..	Chandkhuri	Do.
(4) Do	Rajnandgaon	Do
(5) Raipur	Shantipur	Do.

	Madhya Pradesh	India
(d) T. B. Sanatorium . ..	1	13

District	Station	Name
Bilaspur ..	Pendra-Road ..	T. B Sanatorium for Men and Women

## (v) Philanthropic

	Madhya Pradesh	India
(a) Homes for the Blind ..	..	9

	Madhya Pradesh	India
(b) Homes for Women ..	3	29

District	Station	Name
(1) Durg .	Balodgahan	Widow Home
(2) Hoshangabad	Sohagpur	Women's Home
(3) Sagar	Sagar	Widows' Home

	Madhya Pradesh	India
(c) Convert Homes . ..	1	7

District	Station	Name
Bilaspur ..	Takhatpur ..	Converts' Home (Girls).

	Madhya Pradesh	India
(d) Orphanages .. ..	20	134

(v) **Philanthropic**—cont

Orphanages —Chukalda, Khudwandpur, Shahapur, Champa, Janjgir, Chanda, Chhindwara, Junnardeo, Seoni, Balodgahan, Dondi, Lohara, Rajnandgaon, Nagpur, Dhamtari, Parsabhadar and Sagar

(vi) **Social Work**

	Madhya Pradesh	India
(a) Social and Welfare Organisations	6	123
Social and Welfare Organisations —Janjgir, Rajnandgaon, two at Hoshangabad, Nagpur and Raipur.		

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